

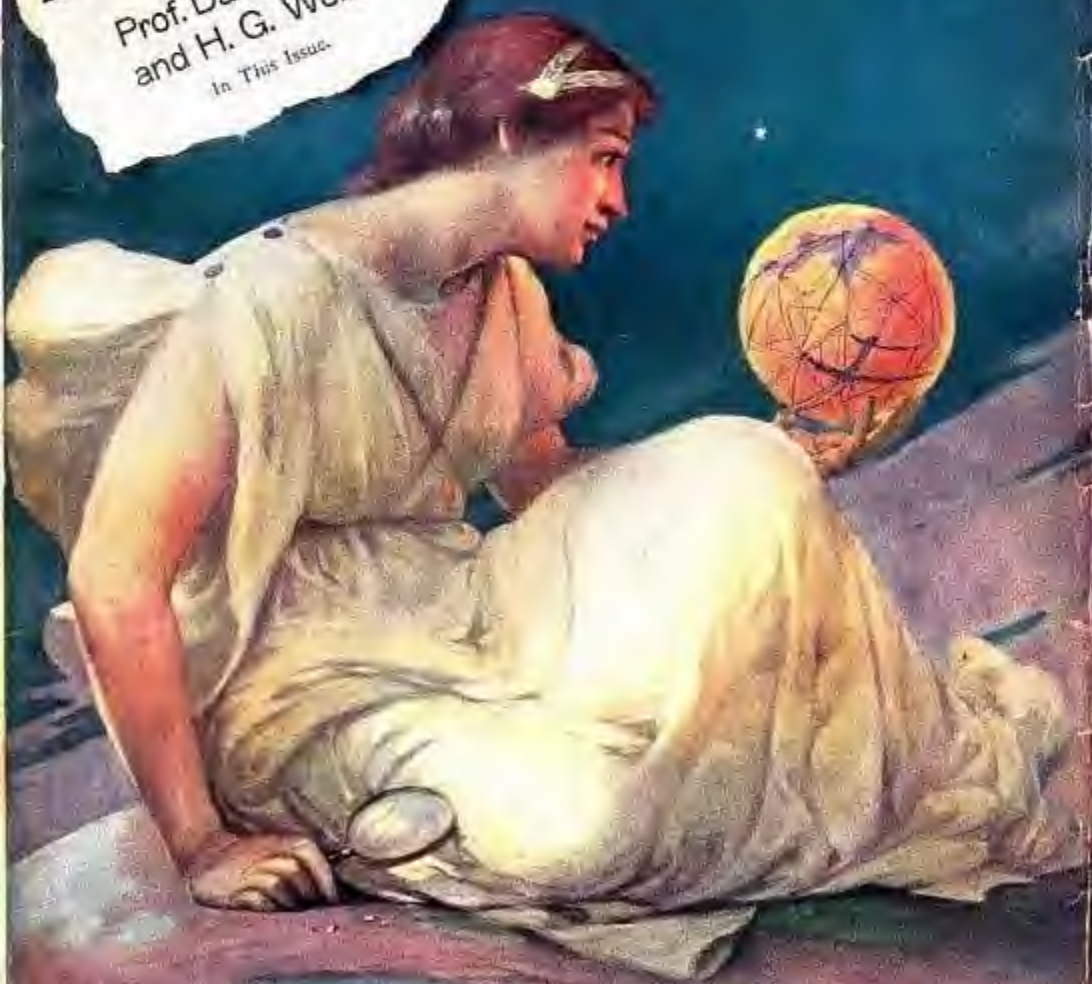
Midwinter

# COSMOPOLITAN

15 Cents

Is Mars Inhabited?

Real  
Prof. David Todd  
and H. G. Wells.  
In This Issue.



## Stories from The Cosmopolitan, Collection 3

- Planchette by Jack London - June to August 1906  
The Miniature by Nancy Huston Banks - May 1907  
The Other Lodgers by Ambrose Bierce - August 1907  
A Wine of Wizardry by George Sterling (poem) -  
September 1907  
The Twins by Morgan Robertson - October 1907  
The King's Messenger by F. Marion Crawford -  
November 1907  
Beyond the Wall by Ambrose Bierce - December 1907  
The Things That Live on Mars by H. G. Wells (article) -  
March 1908  
The Man by Ambrose Bierce - September 1908  
Three and One Are One by Ambrose Bierce - October 1908  
How the Hyæna Came to Laugh by Oliver Herford (cartoons  
by T. S. Sullivant) - November 1908  
The Wizard and the Child by Arthur Colson - January 1909  
The Delusion of Ralph Penwyn by Julian Hawthorne -  
February 1909  
A Stranger by Ambrose Bierce - February 1909  
Said the Monkey to the Elephant by T. S. Sullivant (cartoons)  
- July 1909  
The Case of Horace Bliffington by Ellis Parker Butler -  
March 1910  
Tales of the Islanders by Charlotte Bronte - October 1911  
Radium by Gouveneur Morris - June 1912  
It by Vance Thompson - March 1914  
Golgotha by Gouverneur Morris - November 1915  
The Message by Ella Wheeler Wilcox (poem) - September 1917  
Devils by Ella Wheeler Wilcox (poem) - March 1918  
The Lake of Long Sleep by Charles G. D. Roberts - June 1918  
An Immortal by Gouveneur Morris - September 1918  
The Red One by Jack London - October 1918



Beware Beware Beware Chris Dunbar  
 I intend to destroy you I have already  
 made two attempts upon your life  
 I shall yet succeed so sure am  
 I that I shall succeed that I dare  
 tell you I do not need to tell you why

## Planchette

BY JACK LONDON

*Illustrated by Charles M. Relyea*

### I



"It is my right to know," the girl said.

Her voice was firm. There was no hint of pleading in it, yet it was the determination that is worked up to through a long period of pleading. But in her case it had been pleading, not of speech, but of personality. Her lips had been ever mute, but her face and eyes, and the very attitude of her soul, had been for a long time eloquent with questioning. This the man had known, but he had never answered; and now she was demanding by the spoken word that he answer.

"It is my right," the girl repeated.

"I know it," he answered, desperately.

She waited, in the silence that followed, her eyes fixed upon the light that filtered down through the lofty boughs and bathed the great redwood trunks in mellow warmth. This light, subdued and colored, seemed almost a radiation from the trunks themselves, so strongly did they

saturate it with their hue. The girl saw without seeing, as she heard without hearing, the deep gurgling of the stream far below on the canyon bottom.

She looked down at the man. "Well?" she asked, with the firmness that feigns belief that obedience will be forthcoming.

She was sitting upright, her back against a fallen tree, while he lay near her, on his side.

"Dear, dear Lute," he murmured.

She shivered at the sound of his voice, not from repulsion, but from struggle against the fascination of its caressing gentleness. She had come to know well the lure of the man—the wealth of easement and rest that was promised by every caressing intonation of his voice, by the mere touch of hand on hand or the faint impact of his breath on neck or cheek. The man could not express himself by word or look or touch without weaving into the expression, subtly and occultly, the feeling as of a hand that passed and that in passing stroked softly and soothingly. Nor was this all-pervading caress a something that cloyed with too great sweetness; nor was it sickly sentimental; nor was it



maudlin with love's madness. It was vigorous, compelling, masculine. For that matter, it was largely unconscious on the man's part; he was only dimly aware of it. It was a part of him, the breath of his soul as it were.

But now, resolved and desperate, she steeled herself against him. He tried to face her, but her gray eyes looked out at him steadily from under cool, level brows, and he dropped his head upon her knee. Her hand strayed into his hair softly, and her face melted into solicitude and tenderness. But when he looked up again, her eyes were steady, her brows cool and level.

"What more can I tell you?" the man asked. He raised his head and met her gaze. "I cannot marry you. I cannot marry any woman. I love you—you know that—better than my own life. I weigh you in the scales against all the dear things of living, and you outweigh everything. I would give everything to possess you, yet I may not. I can never marry you."

Her lips were compressed with the effort of control. His head was sinking back to her knee, when she checked him.

"You are already married, Chris?"

"No! no!" he cried, vehemently. "I have never been married. I want to marry only you, and I cannot!"

"Then——"

"Don't!" he interrupted; "don't ask me!"

"It is my right to know," she repeated.

"I know it," he again interrupted; "but I cannot tell you."

"You have not considered me, Chris," she went on gently. "You do not know what I have had to bear from my people because of you."

"I did not think they felt so very unkindly toward me," he said bitterly.

"It is true. They can scarcely tolerate you. They do not show it to you, but they almost hate you. It is I who have to bear all this. It was not always so, though. They liked you at first as—as I liked you. But that was four years ago. The time passed by—a year, two years; and then they began to turn against you. They are not to be blamed; you spoke no word. They felt that you were destroying my life. It is four years now, and you have never once mentioned marriage to them. What were they to think? Just what they have thought, that you were destroying my life."

As she talked, she continued to pass her fingers caressingly through his hair, sorrowful for the pain that she was inflicting.

"They did like you at first—who can help liking you? You seem to draw affection from all living things, as the trees draw the moisture from the ground. Aunt Mildred and Uncle Robert thought there was nobody like you. The sun rose and set in you. They thought I was the luckiest girl alive to win the love of a man like you. 'For it looks very much like it,' Uncle Robert used to say, wagging his head wickedly at me. Of course they liked you. Aunt Mildred used to sigh, and look across teasingly at uncle, and say, 'When I think of Chris it almost makes me wish I were younger myself.' And uncle would answer, 'I don't blame you, my dear, not in the least.' And then the pair of them would literally beam upon me their congratulations that I had won the love of a man like you."

"And they knew I loved you as well. How could I hide it—this great, wonderful thing that had entered into my life and swallowed up all my days? For four years, Chris, I have lived only for you. Every moment was yours. Waking I loved you; sleeping I dreamed of you. Every act I have performed was shaped by you, by the thought of you. I had no end, petty or great, that you were not there waiting for me."

"I had no idea of imposing such slavery," he muttered.

"You imposed nothing. You always let me have my own way; it was you who were the obedient slave. You did for me without offending me. You forestalled my wishes without the semblance of forestalling them, so natural and inevitable was everything you did for me. You were no dancing puppet; you made no fuss. Don't you see? You did not seem to do things at all. Somehow they were always there, just done, as a matter of course."

"The slavery was love's slavery. It was just my love for you that made you swallow up all my days. You did not force yourself into my thoughts. You crept in, always, and you were there always—how much you will never know."

"But as time went by, Aunt Mildred and uncle grew afraid. What was to become of me? You were destroying my life. My music—you know how my



dream of it has dimmed away. That spring when I first met you, I was twenty, and I was about to start for Germany. I was going to study hard. That was four years ago, and I am still here in California.

"I had other lovers. You drove them away. No! no! I don't mean that. It was I that drove them away. What did I care for lovers, for anything when you were near? But as I said, Aunt Mildred and uncle grew afraid. There has been talk—friends, busybodies, and all the rest. The time went by; you did not speak. I could only wonder, wonder. I knew you loved me. Much was said against you by uncle at first, and then by Aunt Mildred. They were father and mother to me, you know. I could not defend you; yet I was loyal to you. I refused to discuss you. There was half-estrangement in my home—Uncle Robert with a face like an undertaker's, and Aunt Mildred's heart breaking. But what could I do, Chris? What could I do?"

The man, his head resting on her knee again, groaned, but made no other reply.

"Aunt Mildred was mother to me; but I went to her no more with my confidences. My childhood's book was closed. It was a sweet book, Chris. The tears come into my eyes sometimes when I think of it. But never mind that. Great happiness has been mine as well. I am glad I can talk frankly of my love for you. And the attaining of such frankness has been very sweet. I do love you, Chris. I love you—I cannot tell you how. You are everything to me, and more besides. You remember that Christmas tree of the children's, when we played blindman's buff, and you caught me by the arm, so, with such a clutching of fingers that I cried out with the hurt? I never told you, but the arm was badly bruised. And such sweet I got of it you could never guess. There, black and blue, was the imprint of your fingers—your fingers, Chris! It was the touch of you made visible. It was there a week, and I kissed the marks—oh, so often! I was loath to see them go, fain to rebruise the arms and make them linger. I was jealous of the returning white that drove the bruise away. Somehow—oh! I cannot explain, but I loved you so!"

In the silence that fell she continued her caressing of his hair, while she idly

watched a great squirrel, boisterous and hilarious, as it scampered back and forth in a distant vista of the redwoods. A crimson-crested woodpecker, energetically drilling a fallen trunk, caught and transferred her gaze. The man did not lift his head. Rather, he crushed his face harder against her knee, while his heaving shoulders marked the hardness with which he breathed.

"You must tell me, Chris," the girl said gently. "This mystery—it is killing me. I must know why we cannot be married. Are we to be ever thus—merely lovers, meeting often, it is true, and yet with the long absences between the meetings? Is it all the world holds for you and me, Chris? Are we never to be more to each other? I want all our days to be together. I want all the companionship, the comradeship, which cannot be ours now, and which will be ours when we are married——" She caught her breath quickly. "But we are never to be married. I forgot. And you must tell me why."

The man raised his head and looked her in the eyes. It was a way he had with whomever he talked.

"I have considered you, Lute," he began, doggedly. "I did consider you at the very first. I should never have gone on with it; I should have gone away. I knew it. And I considered you in the light of that knowledge, and yet—I did not go away. My God! what was I to do? I loved you. I could not go away. I could not help it. I stayed. I resolved, but I broke my resolves. I was like a drunkard. I was drunk of you. I was weak, I know. I failed. I could not go away—I tried. I went away, you will remember, though you did not know why. You know now. I went away, but I could not remain away. Send me away, Lute; I have not the power to go myself."

"But why should you go away?" she asked. "Besides, I must know why before I can send you away."

"Don't ask me."

"Tell me," she said, her voice tenderly imperative.

"Don't, Lute; don't force me," the man pleaded, and there was appeal in his eyes and voice.

"But you must tell me," she insisted. "It is a justice you owe me."



The man wavered. "If I do——" he began. Then he ended with determination, "I should never be able to forgive myself. No, I cannot tell you. Don't try to compel me, Lute. You would be as sorry as I."

"If there is anything—if there are obstacles—if this mystery does really prevent——" She was speaking slowly, with long pauses, seeking the more delicate ways of speech for the framing of her thought. "Chris, I do truly love you. I love you as deeply as it is possible for any woman to love, I am sure. If you were to say to me now, 'Come,' I would arise and go with you. I would follow wherever you led me. I would be your page, as in the days of old when ladies went with their knights to far lands. You are my knight, Chris, and you can do no wrong. Your will is my wish. I was once afraid of the censure of the world; now that you have come into my life I am no longer afraid. I would laugh at the world and its censure for your sake—for my sake, too. I would laugh, for I should have you, and you are more to me than the good will and approval of the world. If you say 'Come,' I will."

"Don't! Don't!" he cried. "It is impossible! Marriage or not, I cannot even say 'Come.' I'll tell you why."

He sat up beside her, the action stamped with resolve. He took her hand in his and held it closely. His lips moved to the verge of speech. The mystery trembled for utterance; the air was palpitant with its presence. As if it were an irrevocable decree of fate, the girl steeled herself to hear. But the man paused, gazing straight out before him. She felt his hand relax in hers, and she pressed it sympathetically, encouragingly. But she felt the rigidity going out of his tense body, and she knew that spirit and flesh were relaxing together. His resolution was ebbing. He would not speak—she knew it; and she knew, likewise, with the sureness of faith, that it was because he could not.

She gazed despairingly before her, a numb feeling at her heart as though hope and happiness had died. She watched the sun flickering down through the warm-trunked redwoods. But she looked at the scene as from a long way off, without interest, herself an alien, no longer an intimate part of the earth and trees she loved so well.

So far removed did she seem that she was

aware of a curiosity, strangely impersonal, in what lay around her. Through a near vista she looked at a buckeye tree in full blossom as though her eyes encountered it for the first time. Her eyes paused and dwelt upon a yellow cluster of Diogenes' lanterns that grew on the edge of an open space. It was the way of flowers always to give her quick pleasure-thrills, but no thrill was hers now. She pondered the flowers slowly and thoughtfully, as a hasheesh-eater, heavy with the drug, might ponder some whim-flower that obtruded on his vision. In her ears was the voice of the stream, a hoarse-throated, sleepy old giant muttering and mumbling his somnolent fancies. But her fancy was not in turn aroused, as was its wont; she knew the sound merely for water rushing over the rocks of the deep canyon bottom.

Her gaze wandered beyond the Diogenes' lanterns into the open space. Knee-deep in the wild oats of the hillside grazed two horses, chestnut-sorrels the pair of them, perfectly matched, warm and golden in the sunshine, their spring coats a sheen of high-lights shot through with color-flashes that glowed like fiery jewels. She recognized, almost with a shock, that one of them was hers—Dolly, the companion of her girlhood and womanhood, on whose neck she had sobbed her sorrows and sung her joys. A moisture welled into her eyes at the sight, and she came back from the remoteness of her mood, quick with passion and sorrow, to be part of the world again.

The man sank forward from the hips, relaxing entirely, and with a groan dropped his head on her knee. She leaned over him and pressed her lips softly and lingeringly to his hair.

"Come, let us go," she said softly, almost in a whisper.

She caught her breath in a half sob, then tightened her lips as she arose. His face was white to ghastliness, so shaken was he by the struggle through which he had passed. They did not look at each other, but walked directly to the horses. She leaned against Dolly's neck while he tightened the girths. Then she gathered the reins in her hand and waited. He looked at her as he bent down, an appeal for forgiveness in his eyes; and in that moment her own eyes answered. Her foot rested in his hands, and from there she vaulted into the saddle.



Without speaking, without further looking at each other, they turned the horses' heads and took the narrow trail that wound down through the somber redwood aisles and across the open glades to the pasture lands below. The trail became a cow-path, the cowpath became a wood-road, which later joined with a hay-road; and they ran down through the low-rolling, tawny California hills to where a set of bars let out on the country road that ran along the bottom of the valley. The girl sat her horse while the man dismounted and began taking down the bars.

"No! Wait!" she cried, before he had touched the two lower bars.

She urged the mare forward a couple of strides, and then the animal lifted over the bars in a clean little jump. The man's eyes sparkled, and he clapped his hands.

"You beauty! you beauty!" the girl cried, leaning forward impulsively in the saddle and pressing her cheek to the mare's neck.

"Let's trade horses for the ride in," she suggested, when he had led his horse through and finished putting up the bars. "You've never sufficiently loved Dolly!"

"No, no," he protested.

"You think she is too old, too sedate," Lute insisted. "She's only sixteen, and she can outrun nine colts out of ten. Only she never cuts up. She's too steady and you don't approve of her—no, don't deny it, sir; I know. And I know also that she can outrun your much-vaunted Washoe Ban. There! I challenge you! And furthermore, you may ride her yourself. You know what Ban can do; so you must ride Dolly and see for yourself what she can do."

They proceeded to exchange the saddles, glad of the diversion and making the most of it.

"I'm glad I was born in California," Lute remarked, as she swung astride of Ban. "It's an outrage both to horse and woman to ride in a sidesaddle."

"You look like a young amazon," the man said approvingly.

"Are you ready?" she asked.

"All ready!"

"To the old mill," she called, as the horses sprang forward. "That's less than a mile."

"This is to a finish?" he demanded.

She nodded, and the horses, feeling the

urge of the reins, caught the spirit of the race. The dust rose in clouds behind them as they tore along the level road.

They rode side by side, saving the animals for the rush in at the finish, yet putting them at a pace that drew upon vitality and staying power. Curving around a clump of white oaks, the road straightened out before them for several hundred yards, at the end of which they could see the ruined mill.

"Now for it!" the girl cried.

She urged the horse by suddenly leaning forward with her body, at the same time, for an instant, letting the rein slack and touching the neck with her bridle hand. She began to draw away from the man.

"Touch her on the neck!" she cried.

With this, the mare pulled alongside and began gradually to pass the girl. Chris and Lute looked at each other for a moment, the mare still drawing ahead, so that Chris was compelled slowly to turn his head. The mill was a hundred yards away.

"Shall I give him the spurs?" Lute shouted.

The man nodded, and the girl drove the spurs in sharply and quickly, calling upon the horse for its utmost, but saw her own horse forge slowly ahead of her.

"Beaten by three lengths!" Lute beamed triumphantly, as they pulled into a walk. "Confess, sir, confess! You didn't think the old mare had it in her." Lute leaned to the side and rested her hand for a moment on Dolly's wet neck.

"Ban's a sluggard alongside of her," Chris affirmed. "Dolly's all right if she is in her Indian summer."

Lute nodded approval. "That's a sweet way of putting it—Indian summer. It just describes her. But she's not lazy; she has all the fire and none of the folly. She is very wise, what of her years."

"That accounts for it," Chris demurred. "Her folly passed with her youth. Many's the lively time she's given you."

"No," Lute answered; "I never knew her really to cut up. I think the only trouble she ever gave me was when I was training her to open gates. She was afraid when they swung back upon her—the animal's fear of the trap, perhaps. But she bravely got over it. And she never was vicious. She never bolted, nor bucked, nor cut up in all her life—never, not once."



The horses went on at a walk, still breathing heavily from their run. The road wound along the bottom of the valley, now and again crossing the stream. From either side rose the drowsy purr of mowing machines, punctuated by the occasional sharp cries of the men who were gathering the hay crop. On the western side of the valley the hills rose green and dark, but the eastern side was already burned brown and tan by the sun.

"There is summer, here is spring," Lute said. "Oh, beautiful Sonoma Valley!"

Her eyes were glistening and her face was radiant with love of the land. Her gaze wandered on across orchard patches and sweeping vineyard stretches, seeking out the purple which seemed to hang like a dim smoke in the wrinkles of the hills and in the more distant canyon gorges. Far up, among the more rugged crests, where the steep slopes were covered with manzanita and chaparral, she caught a glimpse of a clear space where the wild grass had not yet lost its green.

"Have you ever heard of the secret pasture?" she asked, her eyes still fixed on the remote green.

A snort of fear brought her eyes back to the man beside her. Dolly, upreared, with distended nostrils and wild eyes, was pawing the air madly with her fore legs. Chris threw himself forward against her neck to keep her from falling backward, and at the same time touched her with the spurs to compel her to drop her fore feet to the ground in order to obey the go-ahead impulse of the spurs.

"Why, Dolly, this is most remarkable," Lute began reprovingly.

But to her surprise the mare threw her head down, arched her back as she went up in the air and, returning, struck the ground stiff-legged and bunched.

"A genuine buck!" Chris called out, and the next moment the mare was rising under him in a second buck.

Lute looked on, astounded at the unprecedented conduct of her mare, and admiring her lover's horsemanship. He was quite cool, and was himself evidently enjoying the performance. Again and again, half a dozen times, Dolly arched herself into the air and struck, stiffly bunched. Then she threw her head straight up and rose on her hind legs,

pivoting about and striking with her fore feet. Lute whirled the horse she was riding into safety, and as she did so caught a glimpse of Dolly's eyes, with the look in them of blind brute-madness, bulging until it seemed they must burst from her head. The faint pink in the whites of the eyes was gone, replaced by a white that was like dull marble and that yet flashed as from some inner fire.

A faint cry of fear, suppressed in the instant of utterance, slipped past Lute's lips. One hind leg of the mare seemed to collapse under her, and for a moment the whole quivering body, upreared and perpendicular, swayed back and forth, and there was uncertainty as to whether it would fall forward or backward. The man, half slipping sideways from the saddle, to fall clear if the mare toppled backward, threw his weight to the front and alongside her neck. This overcame the dangerous teetering balance, and the mare struck the ground on her feet again.

But there was no let-up. Dolly straightened out so that the line of the face was almost a continuation of the line of the stretched neck; this position enabled her to master the bit, which she did by bolting straight ahead down the road.

For the first time Lute became really frightened. She spurred Washoe Ban in pursuit, but he could not hold his own with the mad mare, and dropped gradually behind. Lute saw Dolly check and rear in the air again, and caught up just as the mare made a second bolt. As Dolly dashed around a bend, she stopped suddenly, stiff-legged, and Lute saw her lover torn out of the saddle, his thigh-grip broken by the sudden jerk. Though he had lost his seat, he had not been thrown, and as the mare dashed on Lute saw him clinging to the side of the mare, a hand in her mane and a leg across the saddle. With a quick effort he regained his seat and proceeded to fight with the mare for control.

But Dolly swerved from the road and dashed down a grassy slope yellowed with innumerable Mariposa lilies. An old fence at the bottom was no obstacle; she burst through as though it were filmy spider web and disappeared in the underbrush. Lute followed unhesitatingly, putting Ban through the gap in the fence and plunging on into the thicket. She lay along his neck closely, to escape the ripping and





DOLLY, UPREARED, WITH DISTENDED NOSTRILS AND WILD EYES, WAS PAWING THE AIR  
MADLY WITH HER FORE LEGS

tearing of the trees and vines. She felt the horse drop down through leafy branches and into the cool gravel of a stream's bottom. From ahead came a splashing of water, and she caught a glimpse of Dolly dashing up the small bank and into a clump of scrub oaks, against the trunks of which she was trying to scrape off her rider.

Lute almost caught up among the trees, but was hopelessly outdistanced on the fallow field adjoining, across which the mare tore with a fine disregard for heavy ground and gopher holes. When she turned at a sharp angle into the thicket land beyond, Lute took the long diagonal, skirted the thicket, and reined in Ban at the other side. She had arrived first. From within the thicket she could hear a tremendous crashing of brush and branches. Then the mare burst through and into the open, falling to her knees, exhausted, on the soft earth. She arose and staggered forward, then came limply to a halt. She was in a lather-sweat of fear, and stood trembling pitifully.

Chris was still on her back. His shirt was in ribbons, the backs of his hands were bruised and lacerated, while his face was streaming with blood from a gash near the temple. Lute had controlled herself well, but now she was aware of a quick nausea and a trembling of weakness.

"Chris!" she said, so softly that it was almost a whisper; then "Thank God!"

"Oh, I'm all right," he cried to her, putting into his voice all the heartiness he could command, which was not much, for he had himself been under no mean nervous strain. He showed the reaction he was undergoing, when he swung down out of the saddle. He began with a brave muscular display as he lifted his leg over, but ended, on his feet, leaning against the limp Dolly for support. Lute flashed out of her saddle, and her arms were about him in an embrace of thankfulness.

"I know where there is a spring," she said, a moment later.

They left the horses standing untethered, and she led her lover to where crystal water bubbled from out the base of the mountain.

"What was that you said about Dolly's never cutting up?" he asked, when the blood had been stanchd and his nerves and pulse beats were at normal again.

"I am stunned," Lute answered; "I

cannot understand it. She never did anything like it in all her life. Why, she is a child's horse. I was only a little girl when I first rode her, and to this day——"

"Well, this day she was everything but a child's horse," Chris broke in. "She was a devil. She tried to scrape me off against the trees, and to batter my brains out against the limbs. And did you see those bucks?"

Lute nodded.

"Regular bucking-broncho proposition."

"But what should she know about bucking?" Lute demanded. "She was never known to buck—never."

He shrugged his shoulders. "Some forgotten instinct, perhaps, long-lapsed and come to life again."

The girl rose to her feet determinedly.

"I'm going to find out," she said.

They went back to the horses, where they subjected Dolly to a rigid examination that disclosed nothing. Hoofs, legs, bit, mouth, body—everything was as it should be. The saddle and saddlecloth were innocent of burr or sticker; the back was smooth and unbroken. They searched for sign of snake bite and sting of fly or insect, but found nothing.

"Whatever it was, it was subjective, that much is certain," Chris said.

"Obsession," Lute suggested.

They laughed together at the idea, for both were twentieth-century products, healthy minded and normal, with souls that delighted in the butterfly-chase of ideals, but that halted before the brink where superstition begins.

"An evil spirit," Chris laughed; "but what evil have I done that I should be so punished?"

"You think too much of yourself, sir," she rejoined. "It is more likely some evil, I don't know what, that Dolly has done. You were a mere accident. I might have been on her back at the time, or Aunt Mildred, or anybody."

As she talked she took hold of the saddle girth and started to loosen it.

"What are you doing?" Chris demanded.

"I'm going to ride Dolly in."

"No, you're not," he announced. "It would be bad discipline. After what has happened I am simply compelled to ride her in myself."

But it was a very weak and very sick mare he rode, stumbling and halting,



afflicted with nervous jerks and recurring muscular spasms—the aftermath of a tremendous excitement.

"I feel like a book of verse and a hammock, after all that has happened," Lute said, as they rode into camp.

It was a summer camp of city-tired people, pitched in a grove of towering redwoods through whose lofty boughs the sunshine trickled down, broken and subdued to soft light and cool shadow. Apart from the main camp were the kitchen and the servants' tents; and midway between was the great dining-hall, walled by the living redwood columns, where fresh whispers of air were always to be found, and where no canopy was needed to keep the sun away.

"Poor Dolly, she is really sick," Lute said that evening, when they had returned from a last look at the mare. "But you weren't hurt, Chris, and that's enough for one small woman to be thankful for. I thought I knew, but I really did not know till to-day how much you mean to me."

"My thoughts were of you," Chris answered, and felt the responsive pressure of the hand that rested on his arm.

She turned her face up to his and met his lips.

"Good night," she said.

"Dear Lute, dear Lute," he caressed her with his voice as she moved away among the shadows.

"Who's going for the mail?" called a woman's voice through the trees.

Lute closed the book from which they had been reading, and sighed.

"We weren't going to ride to-day," she said.

"Let me go," Chris proposed; "you stay here. I'll be down and back in no time."

She shook her head.

"Who's going for the mail?" the voice insisted.

"Where's Martin?" Lute called, lifting her voice in answer.

"I don't know," came the voice. "I think Robert took him along somewhere—horse-buying, or fishing, or I don't know what. There's really nobody left but Chris and you. Besides, it will give you an appetite for dinner. You've been lounging in the hammock all day. And Robert *must* have his newspaper."

"All right, aunty, we're starting," Lute called back, getting out of the hammock.

A few minutes later, in riding-clothes, they were saddling the horses. They rode out onto the county road, where blazed the afternoon sun, and turned toward Glen Ellen. The little town slept in the sun, and the somnolent storekeeper and postmaster scarcely kept his eyes open long enough to make up the packet of letters and newspapers.

An hour later Lute and Chris turned aside from the road and dipped along a cowpath down the high bank to water the horses before going into camp.

"Dolly looks as though she'd forgotten all about yesterday," Chris said, as they sat their horses knee-deep in the rushing water. "Look at her."

The mare had raised her head, and cocked her ears at the rustling of a quail in the thicket. Chris leaned over and rubbed around her ears. Her enjoyment was evident, and she drooped her head over against the shoulder of his own horse.

"Like a kitten," was Lute's comment.

"Yet I shall never be able wholly to trust her again," Chris said. "Not after yesterday's mad freak."

"I have a feeling myself that you are safer on Ban," Lute laughed. "It is strange. My trust in Dolly is as implicit as ever. I feel confident so far as I am concerned, but I should never care to see you on her back again. Now with Ban, my faith is still unshaken."

"I feel the same way," Chris laughed back. "Ban could never possibly betray me."

They turned their horses out of the stream. Dolly stopped to brush a fly from her knee with her nose, and Ban urged past into the narrow way of the path. The space was too restricted to make him return, save with much trouble, and Chris allowed him to go on. Lute, riding behind, dwelt with her eyes upon her lover's back, pleasuring in the lines of the bare neck and the sweep out to the muscular shoulders.

Suddenly she reined in her horse. There was nothing else for her to do but look, so brief was the duration of the happening. Beneath and above was the almost perpendicular bank. The path itself was barely wide enough for footing; yet Washoe Ban, whirling and rearing at the same time, toppled for a moment in the air and fell backward off the path.

(To be continued.)



Beware Beware Beware Chris Dunbar  
 I intend to destroy you I have already  
 made two attempts upon your life  
 I shall yet succeed so sure am  
 I that I shall succeed that I dare  
 tell you I do not need to tell you why


## Planchette

BY JACK LONDON

*Illustrated by Charles M. Relyea*

**SYNOPSIS:** A party of city people is camping in the Sonoma Valley, California. Two of its members, Chris and Lute, ride one afternoon into the redwood forest. They are lovers, but the man tells the girl, as he has often told her before, that he cannot marry her. Lute urges that it is her right to know why; Chris simply repeats that he cannot explain the situation, and says that if he does she will be as sorry as he. It becomes time to return to camp. She mounts her gentle mare, Dolly, and he his horse, Washoe Ban. On the way they trade horses for the ride in. Suddenly, and for no apparent reason, Dolly, with Chris on her back, uprears and paws the air madly. She bolts into a thicket and tries unsuccessfully to scrape her rider off against the trees, stopping finally through exhaustion. Chris is badly shaken but not much hurt. The cause of the mare's performance is a complete mystery. They decide it must be an evil spirit come to punish Chris for something he has done. The next afternoon the young couple go for the mail. On the way back they are riding along a narrow path cut in an almost perpendicular bank. At this point Washoe Ban suddenly rears and topples backward off the path.

### II

O unexpected and so quick was it, that the man was involved in the fall. There had been no time for him to throw himself to the path. He was falling ere he knew it, and he did the only thing possible—slipped the stirrups and threw his body into the air, to the side, and at the same time down. It was twelve feet to the rocks below. He maintained an upright position, his head up and his eyes fixed on the horse above him and falling upon him.

He struck like a cat, on his feet, on the instant making a leap to the side. The next instant Ban crashed down beside him. The animal struggled little, but sounded the terrible cry that horses sometimes sound when they have received mortal hurt. He had struck almost squarely on his back, and in that position he remained, his head twisted partly under, his hind legs relaxed and motionless, his fore legs futilely striking the air.

Chris looked up reassuringly.

"I am getting used to it," Lute smiled down to him. "Of course I need not ask if you are hurt. Can I do anything?"

He smiled back and went over to the



fallen beast, letting go the girths of the saddle and getting the head straightened out.

"I thought so," he said, after a cursory examination; "I thought so at the time. Did you hear that sort of crunching snap?"

Lute shuddered.

"Well, that was the punctuation of life, the final period dropped at the end of Ban's usefulness." He started around to come up by the path. "I've been astride of Ban for the last time. Let us go home."

At the top of the bank Chris turned and looked down.

"Good-by, Washoe Ban!" he called out; "good-by, old fellow."

The animal was struggling to lift its head. There were tears in Chris's eyes as he turned abruptly away, and tears in Lute's eyes as they met his. She was silent in her sympathy, though the pressure of her hand was firm in his as he walked beside her horse down the dusty road.

"It was done deliberately," Chris burst forth suddenly. "There was no warning. He deliberately flung himself over backward."

"There was no warning," Lute concurred. "I was looking; I saw him. He whirled and threw himself at the same time, just as if you had done it yourself with a tremendous jerk and backward pull on the bit."

"It was not my hand, I swear it. I was not even thinking of him. He was going up with a fairly loose rein, as a matter of course."

"I should have seen it, had you done it," Lute said. "But it was all done before you had a chance to do anything. It was not your hand, not even your unconscious hand."

"Then it was some invisible hand, reaching out from I don't know where."

He looked up whimsically at the sky and smiled at the conceit.

Martin stepped forward to receive Dolly when they came into the stable end of the grove, but his face expressed no surprise at sight of Chris coming in on foot. Chris lingered behind Lute for a moment.

"Can you shoot a horse?" he asked.

The groom nodded, then added, "Yes, sir."

"How do you do it?"

"Draw a line from the eyes to the ears—I mean the opposite ears, sir—and where the lines cross—"

"That will do," Chris interrupted. "You know the watering-place at the second bend. You'll find Ban there with a broken back."

"Oh, here you are, sir. I have been looking for you everywhere since dinner. You are wanted immediately."

Chris tossed his cigar away, then went over and pressed his foot on its glowing fire.

"You haven't told anybody about it?—Ban?" he queried.

Lute shook her head. "They'll learn soon enough. Martin will mention it to Uncle Robert to-morrow. But don't feel too badly about it," she said, after a moment's pause, slipping her hand into his.

"He was my colt," he said; "nobody has ridden him but you. I broke him myself. I knew him from the time he was born. I knew every bit of him, every trick, every caper; and I would have staked my life that it was impossible for him to do a thing like that. There was no warning, no fighting for the bit, no previous unruliness. I have been thinking it over. He didn't fight for the bit, for that matter. He wasn't unruly, nor disobedient, there wasn't time. It was an impulse, and he acted upon it like lightning. I am astounded now at the swiftness with which it took place. Inside the first second we were over the edge and falling."

"It was suicide—deliberate suicide—and attempted murder. It was a trap; I was the victim. He had me, and he threw himself over with me. Yet he did not hate me. He loved me as much as it is possible for a horse to love. I am confounded. I cannot understand it any more than you can understand Dolly's behavior yesterday."

"But horses go insane, Chris," Lute said. "You know that. It's merely a coincidence that two horses in two days should have spells under you."

"That's the only explanation," he answered, starting off with her. "But why am I wanted so urgently?"

"Planchette."

"Oh, I remember. It will be a new experience to me."

"And to all of us," Lute replied, "except Mrs. Grantly. It is her favorite phantom, it seems."

"A weird little thing," he remarked, "a bundle of nerves and black eyes. I'll



wager she doesn't weigh ninety pounds, and most of that's magnetism."

"Positively uncanny—at times." Lute shivered involuntarily. "She gives me the creeps."

"Contact of the healthy with the morbid," he explained dryly. "You will notice it is the healthy person that always has the creeps. The morbid one never has the creeps. Morbidity gives the creeps—that's its function. Where did you people pick her up anyway?"

"I don't know—yes, I do, too. Aunt Mildred met her in Boston, I think. Oh, I don't know. At any rate, Mrs. Grantly came to California, and of course had to visit Aunt Mildred. You know the open house we keep."

They halted where a passageway between two great redwood trunks gave entrance to the dining-room. Above, through lacing boughs, could be seen the stars. Candles lighted the tree-columned space. About the table, examining the Planchette contrivance, were four people. Chris's gaze roved over them and he was aware of a guilty sorrow-pang as he paused for a moment on Lute's Aunt Mildred and Uncle Robert, mellow with ripe middle age and genial with the gentle buffets life had dealt them. He passed amusedly over the black-eyed, frail-bodied Mrs. Grantly, and halted on the fourth person, a portly, massive-headed man, whose gray temples belied the youthful solidity of his face.

"Who's that?" Chris whispered.

"A Mr. Barton. The train was late; that's why you didn't see him at dinner. He's only a capitalist—water-power-long-distance-electricity-transmitter, or something like that."

"Doesn't look as though he could give an ox points on imagination."

"He can't. He inherited his money, but he knows enough to hold on to it and hire other men's brains. He is very conservative."

"That is to be expected," was Chris's comment. His gaze went back to the man and woman who had been father and mother to the girl beside him. "Do you know," he said, "it came to me with a shock yesterday when you told me that they had turned against me, that I was scarcely tolerated. I met them afterward, last evening, guiltily, in fear and trembling—

and to-day, too. And yet I could see no difference from of old."

"Dear man," Lute sighed, "hospitality is as natural to them as the act of breathing. But it isn't that, after all. It is all genuine in their dear hearts. No matter how severe the censure they put upon you when you are absent, the moment they are with you they soften and are all kindness and warmth. As soon as their eyes rest on you, affection and love come bubbling up. You are so made. Every animal likes you. All people like you—they can't help it. You can't help it. You are universally lovable, and the best of it is that you don't know it. You don't know it now. Even as I tell it to you, you don't realize it, you won't realize it—and that very incapacity to realize it, is one of the reasons why you are so loved. You are incredulous now, and you shake your head; but I know, who am your slave, as all people know, for they likewise are your slaves."

"Why, in a minute we shall go in and join them. Mark the affection, almost maternal, that will well up in Aunt Mildred's eyes. Listen to the tone of Uncle Robert's voice when he says, 'Well, Chris, my boy?' Watch Mrs. Grantly melt, literally melt, like a dewdrop in the sun."

"Take Mr. Barton, there. You have never seen him before. Why, you will invite him out to smoke a cigar with you when the rest of us have gone to bed—you, a mere nobody, and he a man of many millions, a man of power, a man obtuse and stupid like the ox; and he will follow you about, smoking the cigar, like a little dog, your little dog, trotting at your back. He will not know he is doing it, but he will be doing it just the same. Don't I know, Chris? Oh, I have watched you, watched you, so often, and loved you for it, and loved you again for it, because you were so delightfully and blindly unaware of what you were doing."

"I'm almost bursting with vanity from listening to you," he laughed, passing his arm around her and drawing her against him.

"Yes," she whispered, "and in this very moment when you are laughing at all that I have said, you, the feel of you, your soul—call it what you will, it is you—is calling for all the love that is in me."

She leaned more closely against him, and sighed as with fatigue. He breathed a kiss



into her hair and held her with firm tenderness.

Aunt Mildred stirred briskly and looked up from the Planchette board.

"Come, let us begin," she said; "it will soon grow chilly. Robert, where are those children?"

"Here we are," Lute called out, disengaging herself.

"Now for a bundle of creeps," Chris whispered, as they started in.

Lute's prophecy of the manner in which her lover would be received, was realized. Mrs. Grantly, unreal, unhealthy, scintillant with frigid magnetism, warmed and melted as though of truth she were dew and he sun; Mr. Barton beamed broadly upon him, and was colossally gracious; Aunt Mildred greeted him with a glow of fondness and motherly kindness; while Uncle Robert genially and heartily demanded, "Well, Chris, my boy, and what of the riding?"

But Aunt Mildred drew her shawl more closely around her and hastened them to the business in hand. On the table was a sheet of paper. On the paper, riding on three supports, was a small triangular board. Two of the supports were easily moving casters. The third support, placed at the apex of the triangle, was a lead pencil.

"Who's first?" Uncle Robert demanded.

There was a moment's hesitancy, then Aunt Mildred placed her hand on the board, and said,

"Some one always has to be the fool for the delectation of the rest."

"Brave woman," applauded her husband. "Now, Mrs. Grantly, do your worst."

"I?" that lady queried. "I do nothing. The power, or whatever you care to think it, is outside of me, as it is outside of all of you. As to what that power is, I will not dare to say. But there is such a power; I have had evidences of it. And you will undoubtedly have evidences of it. Now please be quiet, everybody. Touch the board very lightly, but firmly, Mrs. Story; but do nothing of your own volition."

Aunt Mildred nodded, and stood with her hand on Planchette, while the rest formed about her in a silent and expectant circle. But nothing happened. The minutes ticked away, and Planchette remained motionless.

"Be patient," Mrs. Grantly counseled.

"Do not struggle against any influences you may feel working on you. But do not do anything yourself, the influences will take care of that. You will feel impelled to do things, and such impulses will be practically irresistible."

"I wish the influences would hurry up," Aunt Mildred protested at the end of five motionless minutes.

"Just a little longer, Mrs. Story, just a little longer," Mrs. Grantly said soothingly.

Suddenly Aunt Mildred's hand began to twitch into movement. A mild concern showed in her face as she observed the movement of her hand and heard the scratching of the pencil-point at the apex of Planchette.

For another five minutes this continued, when Aunt Mildred withdrew her hand with an effort and said, with a nervous laugh:

"I don't know whether I did it myself or not. I do know that I was growing nervous, standing there like a psychic fool with all your solemn faces turned upon me."

"Hen-scratches," was Uncle Robert's judgment, when he looked over the paper upon which she had scrawled.

"Quite illegible," was Mrs. Grantly's dictum. "It does not resemble writing at all. The influences have not got to working yet. Do you try it, Mr. Barton."

That gentleman stepped forward, ponderously willing to please, and placed his hand on the board. And for ten solid, stolid minutes he stood there, motionless as a statue, the frozen personification of the commercial age. Uncle Robert's face began to work. He blinked, stiffened his mouth, uttered suppressed, throaty sounds, deep down, finally snorted, lost his self-control, and broke out in a roar of laughter. All joined in his merriment, including Mrs. Grantly. Mr. Barton laughed with them, but he was vaguely nettled.

"You try it, Story," he said.

Uncle Robert, still laughing and urged on by Lute and his wife, took the board. Suddenly his face sobered. His hand had begun to move, and the pencil could be heard scratching across the paper.

"By George!" he muttered; "that's curious. Look at it. I'm not doing it, I know I'm not doing it. Look at that hand go! Just look at it!"

"Now, Robert, none of your ridiculousness," his wife warned him.





CHRIS LOOKED UP REASSURINGLY, "I AM GETTING USED TO IT," LUTE SMILED DOWN TO HIM



"I tell you I'm not doing it," he replied indignantly. "The force has got hold of me. Ask Mrs. Grantly. Tell her to make it stop, if you want it to stop. I can't stop it. By George! look at that flourish. I didn't do that; I never wrote a flourish in my life."

"Do try to be serious," Mrs. Grantly warned them. "An atmosphere of levity does not conduce to the best operation of Planchette."

"There, that will do, I guess," Uncle Robert said as he took his hand away. "Now let's see."

He bent over and adjusted his glasses. "It's handwriting at any rate, and that's better than the rest of you did. Here, Lute, your eyes are young."

"Oh, what flourishes!" Lute exclaimed, as she looked at the paper. "And look there, there are two different handwritings."

She began to read: "*This is the first lecture. Concentrate on this sentence: 'I am a positive spirit and not negative to any condition.' Then follow with concentration on positive love. After that peace and harmony will vibrate through and around your body. Your soul—*" The other writing breaks right in. This is the way it goes: '*Bullfrog 95, Dixie 16, Golden Anchor 65, Gold Mountain 13, Jim Butler 70, Jumbo 75, North Star 42, Rescue 7, Black Butte 75, Brown Hope 16, Iron Top 3.*'"

"Iron Top's pretty low," Mr. Barton murmured.

"Robert, you've been dabbling again!" Aunt Mildred cried accusingly.

"No, I've not," he denied; "I only read the quotations. But how the devil—I beg your pardon—they got there on that piece of paper I'd like to know."

"Your subconscious mind," Chris suggested. "You read the quotations in to-day's paper."

"No, I didn't; but last week I glanced over the column."

"A day or a year is all the same in the subconscious mind," said Mrs. Grantly. "The subconscious mind never forgets. But I am not saying that this is due to the subconscious mind. I refuse to state to what I think it is due."

"But how about that other stuff?" Uncle Robert demanded. "Sounds like what I'd think Christian Science ought to sound like."

"Or theosophy," Aunt Mildred volunteered. "Some message to a neophyte."

"Go on, read the rest," her husband commanded.

"*'This puts you in touch with the mightier spirits,'*" Lute read. "*'You shall become one with us, and your name will be 'Arya,' and you will—Conqueror 20, Empire 12, Columbia Mountain 18, Midway 140—*" and that is all. Oh, no! here's a last flourish, '*Arya, from Kandor.*' That must surely be the Mahatma."

"I'd like to have you explain that theosophy stuff on the basis of the subconscious mind, Chris," Uncle Robert challenged.

Chris shrugged his shoulders. "No explanation. You must have got a message intended for some one else."

"Lines were crossed, eh?" Uncle Robert chuckled. "Multiplex spiritual wireless telegraphy, I'd call it."

"It is nonsense," Mrs. Grantly said. "I never knew Planchette to behave so outrageously. There are disturbing influences at work. I felt them from the first. Perhaps it is because you are all making too much fun at it. You are too hilarious."

"A certain befitting gravity should grace the occasion," Chris agreed, placing his hand on Planchette. "Let me try. And not one of you must laugh or giggle, or even think laugh or giggle. And if you dare to snort, even once, Uncle Robert, there is no telling what occult vengeance may be wreaked upon you."

"I'll be good," Uncle Robert rejoined. "But if I really must snort, may I silently slip away?"

Chris nodded. His hand had already begun to work. There had been no preliminary twitching nor tentative essays at writing. At once his hand had started off, and Planchette was moving swiftly and smoothly across the paper.

"Look at him," Lute whispered to her aunt. "See how white he is."

Chris betrayed disturbance at the sound of her voice, and thereafter silence was maintained. Only the steady scratching of the pencil could be heard. Suddenly, as though it had been stung, he jerked his hand away. With a sigh and a yawn he stepped back from the table, then glanced with the curiosity of a newly awakened man at their faces.

"I think I wrote something," he said.

"I should say you did," Mrs. Grantly



remarked with satisfaction, holding up the sheet of paper and glancing at it.

"Read it aloud," Uncle Robert said.

"Here it is, then. It begins with 'beware' written three times, in a bold hand. *'Beware! Beware! Beware! Chris Dunbar, I intend to destroy you. I have already made two attempts upon your life, and failed. I shall yet succeed. So sure am I that I shall succeed that I dare to tell you. I do not need to tell you why. In your own heart you know. The wrong you are doing—'* and here it abruptly ends."

Mrs. Grantly laid the paper down on the table and looked at Chris, who had already become the center of all eyes, and who was yawning as from an overpowering drowsiness.

"Quite a sanguinary turn, I should say," Uncle Robert remarked.

"*'I have already made two attempts upon your life,'*" Mrs. Grantly read from the paper, which she was going over a second time.

"On my life?" Chris demanded between yawns. "Why, my life hasn't been attempted even once. My! I am sleepy!"

"Ah, my boy, you are thinking of flesh-and-blood men," Uncle Robert laughed. "But this is a spirit. Your life has been attempted by unseen things. Most likely ghostly hands have tried to throttle you in your sleep."

"Oh, Chris!" Lute cried impulsively; "this afternoon! the hand you said must have seized your rein!"

"But I was joking," he objected.

"Nevertheless——" Lute left her thought unspoken.

Mrs. Grantly had become keen on the scent. "What was that about this afternoon? Was your life in danger?"

Chris's drowsiness had disappeared. "I'm becoming interested myself," he acknowledged. "We haven't said anything about it. Ban broke his back this afternoon. He threw himself off the bank, and I ran the risk of being caught underneath."

"I wonder, I wonder," Mrs. Grantly communed aloud. "There is something in this. It is a warning. Ah! You were hurt yesterday riding Miss Story's horse! That makes the two attempts!"

She looked triumphantly at them. Planchette had been vindicated.

"Nonsense," laughed Uncle Robert, but with a slight hint of irritation in his manner.

"Such things do not happen these days. This is the twentieth century, my dear madam. The thing, at the very latest, smacks of mediævalism."

"I have had such wonderful tests with Planchette," Mrs. Grantly began; then broke off suddenly to go to the table and place her hand on the board.

"Who are you?" she asked. "What is your name?"

The board immediately began to write. By this time all heads, with the exception of Mr. Barton's, were bent over the table and following the pencil.

"It's Dick," Aunt Mildred cried, a note of the mildly hysterical in her voice.

Her husband straightened up, his face for the first time grave.

"It's Dick's signature," he said. "I'd know his fist in a thousand."

"*'Dick Curtis,'*" Mrs. Grantly read aloud. "Who is Dick Curtis?"

"By Jove, that's remarkable!" Mr. Barton broke in. "The handwriting in both instances is the same. Clever, I should say, really clever," he added admiringly.

"Let me see," Uncle Robert demanded, taking the paper and examining it. "Yes, it is Dick's handwriting."

"But who is Dick?" Mrs. Grantly insisted. "Who is this Dick Curtis?"

"Dick Curtis, why, he was Captain Richard Curtis," Uncle Robert answered.

"He was Lute's father," Aunt Mildred supplemented. "Lute took our name. She never saw him; he died when she was a few weeks old. He was my brother."

"Remarkable, most remarkable," Mrs. Grantly was revolving the message in her mind. "There were two attempts on Mr. Dunbar's life. The subconscious mind cannot explain that, for none of us knew of the accident to-day."

"I knew," Chris answered, "and it was I that operated Planchette. The explanation is simple."

"But the handwriting," interposed Mr. Barton. "What you wrote and what Mrs. Grantly wrote are identical."

Chris bent over and compared the handwritings.

"Besides," Mrs. Grantly cried, "Mr. Story recognizes the handwriting."

She looked at him for verification.

He nodded his head. "Yes, it is Dick's fist, I'll swear to that."



But to Lute had come a visioning. While the rest argued pro and con, and the air was filled with phrases—"psychic phenomena," "self-hypnotism," "residuum of unexplained truth," and "spiritualism"—she was reviving mentally the girlhood pictures she had conjured of this soldier-father she had never seen. She possessed his sword, there were several old-fashioned daguerreotypes, there was much that had been said of him, stories told of him—and all this had constituted the material out of which she had builded him in her childhood fancy.

"There is the possibility of one mind unconsciously suggesting to another mind," Mrs. Grantly was saying; but through Lute's mind was trooping her father on his great roan war horse. Now he was leading his men. She saw him on lonely scouts, or in the midst of the yelling Indians at Salt Meadows, when of his command he returned with one man in ten. And in the picture she had of him, in the physical semblance she had made of him, was reflected his spiritual nature—reflected by her worshipful artistry in form and feature and expression—his bravery, his quick temper, his impulsive championship, his madness of wrath in a righteous cause, his warm generosity and swift forgiveness, and his chivalry that epitomized codes and ideals primitive as the days of knighthood. And first, last, and always, dominating all, she saw in the face of him the hot passion

and quickness of deed that had earned for him the name, "Fighting Dick Curtis."

"Let me put it to the test," she heard Mrs. Grantly saying. "Let Miss Story try Planchette. There may be a further message."

"No, no, I beg of you," Aunt Mildred interposed. "It is too uncanny. It surely is wrong to tamper with the dead. Besides, I am nervous. Or, better, let me go to bed, leaving you to go on with your experiments. That will be the best way, and you can tell me in the morning." Mingled with the "good nights" were half-hearted protests from Mrs. Grantly, as Aunt Mildred withdrew.

"Robert can return," she called back, "as soon as he has seen me to my tent."

"It would be a shame to give it up now," Mrs. Grantly said. "There is no telling what we are on the verge of. Won't you try it, Miss Story?"

Lute obeyed, but when she placed her hand on the board she was conscious of a vague and nameless fear at this toying with the supernatural. She was twentieth century, and the thing in essence, as her uncle had said, was mediæval. Yet she could not shake off the instinctive fear that arose in her—man's inheritance from the wild and howling ages when his hairy, ape-like prototype was afraid of the dark, and personified the elements into things of fear.

(To be concluded.)

## The Dream Child

BY PAULINE BROWER

Two little hands like daisies are plucking at my gown,  
And on my breast is resting a head of thistle down  
That gleams all silver, silver, like moonlight on the sea;  
While two star eyes of wonder are looking up at me.  
And like a cool wave creeping upon a parched sand,  
And like a fall of raindrops upon a thirsty land,  
His arms come softly stealing to wreathe my neck about,  
And we two cling together with all the world shut out.





LUTE WAS OFF HER HORSE, SHE KNEW NOT HOW, AND TO THE EDGE

(*Planchette*)



Beware Beware Beware Chris Dunbar  
 I intend to destroy you I have already  
 made two attempts upon your life  
 I shall yet succeed so sure am  
 I that I shall succeed that I dare  
 tell you I do not need to tell you why

## Planchette

BY JACK LONDON

*Illustrated by Charles M. Relyea*

**SYNOPSIS:** Chris Dunbar and Lute Story are members of a camping party in the Sonoma Valley, California. The man is in love with the girl, but tells her that he cannot marry her. In spite of her questionings, he refuses to say why, simply repeating that he cannot explain. Chris meets with some extraordinary adventures. One day while he is riding Lute's gentle mare she suddenly bolts, and the young man has a narrow escape from injury. The next day his own horse throws itself backward off the path, down an embankment, and breaks its back. Chris is unhurt. Mrs. Grantly, a woman interested in psychic phenomena, comes to the camp as a visitor. She brings a Planchette board, which the company is eager to try. There is little success until Chris places his hand on it. Instantly comes a message warning him that he is to be killed, and telling him that two attempts have already been made upon his life. The latter statement Chris denies. The handwriting is recognized as that of Lute's father, an army officer, long since dead. To get a further message it is proposed that Lute try the board.

### III



AS the mysterious influence seized Lute's hand and sent it writing across the paper, all the unusual passed out of the situation and she was unaware of more than a feeble curiosity. For she was intent on another visioning—this time of her mother, who was also unremembered in the flesh—not sharp and vivid like that of her father, but dim and nebulous as the picture she shaped of her mother—a saint's head in an aureole of sweetness and good-

ness and meekness, and, withal, shot through with a hint of reposeful determination of will, stubborn and unobtrusive, that in life had expressed itself mainly in resignation.

Lute's hand had ceased moving and Mrs. Grantly was already reading the message that had been written.

"It is a different handwriting," she said, "a woman's hand. 'Martha,' it is signed. Who is Martha?"

Lute was not surprised. "It is my mother," she said simply. "What does she say?"

She had not been made sleepy, as Chris had; but the keen edge of her vitality had



been blunted, and she was experiencing a sweet and pleasing lassitude. And while the message was being read, in her eyes persisted the vision of her mother.

"*Dear child,*" Mrs. Grantly read, "*do not mind him. He was ever quick of speech and rash. Be no niggard with your love. Love cannot hurt you. To deny love is to sin. Obey your heart and you can do no wrong. Obey worldly considerations, obey pride, obey those that prompt you against your heart's prompting, and you do sin. Do not mind your father. He is angry now, as was his way to be in the earth-life; but he will come to see the wisdom of my counsel, for this, too, was his way in the earth-life. Love, my child, and love well.—Martha.*"

"Let me see it," Lute cried, seizing the paper and devouring the handwriting with her eyes. She was thrilling with unexpressed love for the mother she had never seen, and this written speech from the grave seemed to give more tangibility to her having ever existed than did the vision of her.

"This is remarkable," Mrs. Grantly was reiterating. "There was never anything like it. Think of it, my dear, both your father and mother here with us to-night."

Lute shivered. The lassitude was gone, and she was her natural self again, vibrant with the instinctive fear of the things unseen. And it was offensive to her mind that, real or illusive, the presence or the memoried existence of her father and mother should be touched by these two people who were practically strangers—Mrs. Grantly, unhealthy and morbid, and Mr. Barton, stolid and stupid with a grossness both of the flesh and the spirit. And it further seemed a trespass that these strangers should thus enter into the intimacy between her and Chris.

She could hear the steps of her uncle approaching, and the situation flashed upon her, luminous and clear. She hurriedly folded the sheet of paper and thrust it into her bosom.

"Don't say anything to him about this second message, Mrs. Grantly, please, and Mr. Barton; nor to Aunt Mildred. It will only cause them irritation and needless anxiety."

In her mind there was also the desire to protect her lover, for she knew that the strain of his present standing with her aunt

and uncle would be added to, unconsciously in their minds, by the weird message of Planchette.

"And please don't let us have any more Planchette," Lute continued hastily. "Let us forget all the nonsense that has occurred."

"Nonsense, my dear child?" Mrs. Grantly was indignantly protesting when Uncle Robert strode into the circle.

"Hello!" he demanded; "what's being done?"

"Too late," Lute answered lightly. "No more stock quotations for you. Planchette is adjourned, and we're just winding up the discussion of the theory of it. Do you know how late it is?"

"Well, what did you do last night after we left?"

"Oh, took a stroll," Chris answered.

Lute's eyes were quizzical as she asked with a tentativeness that was palpably assumed, "With—a—with Mr. Barton?"

"Why, yes."

"And a smoke?"

"Yes; and now what's it all about?"

Lute broke into merry laughter. "Just as I told you that you would do. Am I not a prophet? But I knew before I saw you that my forecast had come true. I have just left Mr. Barton, and I knew he had walked with you last night, for he is vowing by all his fetiches and idols that you are a perfectly splendid young man. I could see it with my eyes shut. The Chris-Dunbar glamour has fallen upon him. But I have not finished the catechism, by any means. Where have you been all morning?"

"Where I am going to take you this afternoon."

"You plan well without knowing my wishes."

"I knew well what your wishes are. It is to see a horse I have found."

Her voice betrayed her delight as she cried, "Oh, good!"

"He is a beauty," Chris said.

But her face had suddenly gone grave, and apprehension brooded in her eyes.

"He's called 'Comanche,'" Chris went on. "A beauty, a regular beauty, the perfect type of the Californian cow-pony. And his lines—why, what's the matter?"

"Don't let us ride any more," Lute said, "at least for a while. Really, I think I am a tiny bit tired of it, too."



He was looking at her in astonishment, and she was bravely meeting his eyes.

"I see a hearse and flowers for you, and a funeral oration; I see the end of the world, and the stars falling out of the sky, and the heavens rolling up as a scroll; I see the living and the dead gathered together for the final judgment, the sheep and the goats, the lambs and the rams and all the rest of it, the white-robed saints, the sound of golden harps, and the lost souls howling as they fall into the pit—all this I see on the day that you, Lute Story, no longer care to ride a horse—a horse, Lute! a horse!"

"For a while, at least," she pleaded.

"Ridiculous!" he cried. "What's the matter? Aren't you well?—you who are always so abominably and adorably well?"

"No, it's not that," she answered. "I know it is ridiculous, Chris, I know it, but the doubt will arise. I cannot help it. You always say I am so sanely rooted to the earth and reality and all that, but—perhaps it's superstition, I don't know—but the whole occurrence, the messages of Planchette, the possibility of my father's hand, I know not how, reaching out to Ban's rein and hurling him and you to death, the correspondence between my father's statement that he has twice attempted your life and the fact that in the last two days your life has twice been endangered by horses—my father was a great horseman—all this, I say, causes the doubt to arise in my mind. What if there be something in it? I am not so sure. Science may be too dogmatic in its denial of the unseen. The forces of the unseen, of the spirit, may well be too subtle, too sublimated, for science to lay hold of and recognize and formulate. Don't you see, Chris, that there is rationality in the very doubt? It may be a very small doubt—oh, so small—but I love you too much to run even that slight risk. Besides, I am a woman, and that should in itself fully account for my predisposition toward superstition.

"Yes, yes, I know, call it unreality. But I've heard you paradoxing upon the reality of the unreal—the reality of delusion to the mind that is sick. And so with me, if you will, it is delusive and unreal; but to me, constituted as I am, it is very real—is real as a nightmare is real, before one awakes."

"The most logical argument for illogic I have ever heard," Chris smiled. "It is

a good gaming proposition, at any rate. You manage to embrace more chances in your philosophy than I do in mine. It reminds me of Sam—the gardener you had a couple of years ago. I overheard him and Martin arguing in the stable. You know what a bigoted atheist Martin is. Well, Martin had deluged Sam with floods of logic. Sam pondered a while, and then he said, 'Foh a fack, Mis' Martin, you jis' tawk like a house afire; but you ain't got de show I has.' 'How's that?' Martin asked. 'Well, you see, Mis' Martin, you has one chance to mah two.' 'I don't see it,' Martin said. 'Mis' Martin, it's dis way. You has jis' de chance, lak you say, to become worms foh de fruitification of de cabbage garden. But I's got de chance to lif' mah voice to de glory of de Lawd as I go paddin' dem golden streets—along 'ith de chance to be jis' worms along 'ith you, Mis' Martin.'"

"You refuse to take me seriously," Lute said, when she had laughed her appreciation.

"How can I take that Planchette rigmarole seriously?" he asked.

"You don't explain it—the handwriting of my father which Uncle Robert recognized—oh, the whole thing, you don't explain it."

"I don't know all the mysteries of mind," Chris answered; "but I believe such phenomena will all yield themselves to scientific explanation in the not distant future."

"Just the same, I have a sneaking desire to find out some more from Planchette," Lute confessed. "The board is still down in the dining-room. We could try it now, you and I, and no one would know."

Chris caught her hand, crying, "Come on! It will be a lark."

Hand in hand they ran down the path to the tree-pillared room.

"The camp is deserted," Lute said, as she placed Planchette on the table. "Mrs. Grantly and Aunt Mildred are lying down, and Mr. Barton has gone off with Uncle Robert. There is nobody to disturb us." She placed her hand on the board. "Now begin."

For a few minutes nothing happened. Chris started to speak, but she hushed him to silence. The preliminary twitchings had appeared in her hand and arm. Then the pencil began to write. They read the message, word by word, as it was written:



*"There is wisdom greater than the wisdom of reason. Love proceeds not out of the dry-as-dust way of the mind. Love is of the heart, and is beyond all reason, and logic, and philosophy. Trust your own heart, my daughter. And if your heart bids you have faith in your lover, then laugh at the mind and its cold wisdom, and obey your heart, and have faith in your lover.—Martha."*

"But that whole message is the dictate of your own heart," Chris cried. "Don't you see, Lute? The thought is your very own, and your subconscious mind has expressed it there on the paper."

"But there is one thing I don't see," she objected.

"And that?"

"Is the handwriting. Look at it; it does not resemble mine at all. It is mincing, it is old-fashioned, it is the old-fashioned feminine of a generation ago."

"But you don't mean to tell me that you really believe that this is a message from the dead?" he interrupted.

"I don't know, Chris," she wavered; "I am sure I don't know."

"It is absurd!" he cried. "These are cobwebs of fancy. When one dies he is dead; he is dust. He goes to the worms, as Martin says. The dead? I laugh at the dead. They do not exist. They are not. I defy the powers of the grave, the men dead and dust and gone!"

"And what have you to say to that?" he challenged, placing his hand on Planchette.

On the instant his hand began to write. Both were startled by the suddenness of it. The message was brief:

*"Beware! Beware! Beware!"*

He was distinctly sobered, but he laughed. "It is like a miracle play. Death we have, speaking to us from the grave. But Good Deeds, where art thou? and Kindred? and Joy? and Household Goods? and Friendship? and all the goodly company?"

But Lute did not share his bravado. Her fright showed itself in her face as she laid her trembling hand on his arm.

"Oh, Chris, let us stop. I am sorry we began it. Let us leave the quiet dead to their rest. It is wrong, it must be wrong. I confess I am affected by it. I cannot help it. As my body is trembling, so is my soul. This speech of the grave, this dead man reaching out from the mold of a generation to protect me from you—there is reason in

it! There is the living mystery that prevents you from marrying me. Were my father alive he would protect me from you. Dead, he still strives to protect me. His hands, his ghostly hands, are against your life!"

"Do be calm," Chris said soothingly. "Listen to me. It is all a lark. We are playing with the subjective forces of our own being, with phenomena which science has not yet explained, that is all. Psychology is so young a science! The subconscious mind has just been discovered, one might say. It is all mystery as yet; the laws of it are yet to be formulated. This is simply unexplained phenomena. But that is no reason why we should immediately account for it by labeling it spiritualism. As yet we do not know, that is all. As for Planchette——"

He abruptly ceased, for at that moment, to enforce his remark, he had placed his hand on Planchette, and at that moment his hand had been seized, as by a paroxysm, and sent dashing, willy nilly, across the paper, writing as the hand of an angry person would write.

"No, I don't care for any more of it," Lute said, when the message was completed. "It is like witnessing a fight between you and my father in the flesh. There is in it the savor of struggle and blows."

She pointed out a sentence that read, *"You cannot escape me nor the just punishment that is yours."*

"Perhaps I visualize too vividly for my own comfort, for I can see his hands at your throat. I know that he is, as you say, dead and dust. But for all that I see him as a man that is alive and walks the earth; I see the anger in his face, the anger and the vengeance, and I see it all directed against you."

She crumpled up the sheets of paper, and put Planchette away.

"We won't bother with it any more," Chris said. "I didn't think it would affect you so strongly. But it's all subjective, I'm sure, with possibly a bit of suggestion thrown in—that and nothing more. And the whole strain of our situation has made conditions unusually favorable for striking phenomena."

"And about our situation," Lute said, as they went slowly up the path they had run down; "what we are to do, I don't know. Are we to go on, as we have gone



on? What is best? Have you thought of anything?"

He debated for a few steps. "I have thought of telling your uncle and aunt."

"What you couldn't tell me?" she asked quickly.

"No," he answered slowly; "but just as much as I have told you. I have no right to tell them more than I have told you."

This time it was she that debated. "No, don't tell them," she said finally; "they wouldn't understand. I don't understand, for that matter, but I have faith in you, and in the nature of things they are not capable of the same implicit faith. You raise up before me a mystery that prevents our marriage, and I believe you; but they could not believe you without doubts arising as to the wrong and ill nature of the mystery. Besides, it would but make their anxieties greater."

"I should go away, I know I should go away," he said, half under his breath. "And I can. I am no weakling. Because I have failed to remain away once is no proof that I shall fail again."

She caught her breath with a quick gasp. "It is like a bereavement to hear you speak of going away and remaining away. I should never see you again. It is too terrible. And do not reproach yourself for weakness. It is I who am to blame. It is I who prevented you from remaining away before, I know. I wanted you so, I want you so."

"There is nothing to be done, Chris, nothing to be done but to go on with it and— and let it work itself out somehow. That is one thing we are sure of: it will work out somehow."

"But it would be easier if I went away," he suggested.

"I am happier when you are here."

"The cruelty of circumstance," he muttered savagely.

"Go or stay—that will be part of the working out. But I do not want you to go, Chris; you know that. And now no more about it. Talk cannot mend it. Let us never mention it again unless—unless some time, some wonderful happy time, you can come to me and say: 'Lute, all is well with me. The mystery no longer binds me. I am free.' Until that time let us bury it, along with Planchette and all the rest, and make the most of the little that is given us."

"And now, to show you how prepared I am to make the most of that little, I am even ready to go with you this afternoon to see the horse—though I wish you wouldn't ride any more, for a few days, anyway, or for a week. What did you say is his name?"

"Comanche," he answered. "I know you will like him."

Chris lay on his back, his head propped by the bare jutting wall of stone, his gaze attentively directed across the canyon to the opposing, tree-covered slope. There was a sound of crashing through underbrush, the ringing of steel-shod hoofs on stone, and an occasional and mossy descent of a dislodged boulder that bounded from the hill and fetched up with a final splash in the torrent that rushed over a wild chaos of rocks beneath him. Now and again he caught glimpses, framed in green foliage, of the golden-brown of Lute's corduroy riding-habit and of the bay horse which moved beneath her.

She rode out into an open space where a loose earth-slide denied lodgment to trees and grass. She halted the horse at the brink of the slide, and glanced down it with a measuring eye. Forty feet beneath, the slide terminated in a small, firm-surfaced terrace, the banked accumulation of fallen earth and gravel.

"It's a good test," she called across the canyon. "I'm going to put him down it."

The animal gingerly launched himself on the treacherous footing, irregularly losing and gaining his hind feet, keeping his fore legs stiff, and steadily and calmly, without panic or nervousness, extricating the fore feet as fast as they sank too deeply into the sliding earth that surged along in a wave before him. When the firm footing at the bottom was reached, he strode out on the little terrace with a quickness and springiness of gait and with glintings of muscular fires that gave the lie to the calm deliberation of his movements on the slide.

"Bravo!" Chris shouted across the canyon, clapping his hands.

"The wisest-footed, clearest-headed horse I ever saw," Lute called back, as she turned the animal to the side and dropped down a broken slope of rubble into the trees again.

Chris followed her by the sound of her progress, and by occasional glimpses where the foliage was more open, as she



zigzagged down the steep and trailless descent. She emerged below him at the rugged rim of the torrent, dropped the horse down a three-foot wall, and halted to study the crossing.

Four feet out in the stream, a narrow ledge thrust above the surface of the water. Beyond the ledge boiled an angry pool. But to the left from the ledge, and several feet lower, was a tiny bed of gravel. A giant boulder prevented direct access to the gravel bed. The only way to gain it was by first leaping to the ledge of rock. She studied it carefully, and the tightening of her bridle arm advertised that she had made up her mind.

Chris, in his anxiety, had sat up to observe more closely what she meditated.

"Don't tackle it," he called.

"I have faith in Comanche," she replied.

"He can't make that side jump to the gravel," Chris warned. "He'll never keep his legs; he'll topple over into the pool. Only one horse in a thousand could do that stunt."

"And Comanche is that very horse," she called back. "Watch him."

She gave the animal his own head, and he leaped cleanly and accurately to the ledge, striking with feet close together on the narrow space. On the instant he struck, Lute lightly touched his neck with the rein, impelling him to the left; and in that instant, tottering on the insecure footing, with front feet slipping over into the pool beyond, he lifted on his hind legs, with a half turn, sprang to the left, and dropped squarely down to the tiny gravel bed. An easy jump brought him across the stream, and Lute angled him up the bank and halted before her lover.

"Well?" she asked.

"I am all tense," Chris answered. "I was holding my breath."

"Buy him by all means," Lute said, dismounting. "He is a bargain. I could dare anything on him. I never in my life had such confidence in a horse's feet."

"His owner says that he has never been known to lose his feet, that it is impossible to get him down."

"Buy him, buy him at once," she counseled, "before the man changes his mind. If you don't, I shall. Oh, such feet! I feel such confidence in them that when I am on him I don't consider he has feet at all. And he's quick as a cat, and instantly obe-

dient. Bridle-wise is no name for it! You could guide him with silken threads. Oh, I know I'm enthusiastic, but if you don't buy him, Chris, I shall. Remember, I've second refusal."

Chris smiled agreement as he changed the saddles. Meanwhile she compared the two horses.

"Of course he doesn't match Dolly the way Ban did," she concluded regretfully; "but his coat is splendid just the same. And think of the horse that is under the coat."

Chris gave her a hand into the saddle, and followed her up the slope to the county road. She reined in suddenly, saying,

"We won't go straight back to camp."

"You forget dinner," he warned.

"But I remember Comanche," she retorted. "We'll ride directly over to the ranch and buy him. Dinner will keep."

"But the cook won't," Chris laughed. "She's already threatened to leave, what of our late-comings?"

"Even so," was the answer. "Aunt Mildred may have to get another cook, but at any rate we shall have got Comanche."

They turned the horses in the other direction, and took the climb of the Nun Canyon road that led over the divide and down into the Napa Valley. But the climb was hard, the going was slow. Sometimes they topped the bed of the torrent by hundreds of feet, and again they dipped down and crossed and recrossed it twenty times in twice as many rods. They rode through the deep shade of clean-trunked maples and towering redwoods, to emerge on open stretches of mountain shoulder where the earth lay dry and cracked under the sun.

On one such shoulder they emerged, where the road stretched level before them for a quarter of a mile. On one side rose the huge bulk of the mountain. On the other side the steep wall of the canyon fell away in impossible slopes and sheer drops to the torrent at the bottom. It was an abyss of green beauty and shady depths, pierced by vagrant shafts of the sun and mottled here and there by the sun's broader blazes. The sound of rushing water ascended on the windless air, and there was a hum of mountain bees.

The horses broke into an easy lope. Chris rode on the outside, looking down into the great depths and pleasuring with his eyes in what he saw. Disassociating it-



self from the murmur of the bees, a murmur arose of falling water. It grew louder with every stride of the horses.

"Look!" he cried.

Lute leaned well out from her horse to see. Beneath them the water slid foaming down a smooth-faced rock to the lip, whence it leaped clear—a pulsating ribbon of white, a-breath with movement, ever falling and ever remaining, changing its substance but never its form, an aerial waterway as immaterial as gauze and as permanent as the hills, that spanned space and the free air from the lip of the rock to the tops of the trees far below, into whose green screen it disappeared to fall into a secret and unseen pool.

They had flashed past. The descending water became a distant murmur that merged again into the murmur of the bees and ceased. Swayed by a common impulse, they looked at each other.

"Oh, Chris, it is good to be alive—and to have you here by my side!"

He answered her by the warm light in his eyes.

All things tended to key them to an exquisite pitch—the movement of their bodies, at one with the moving bodies of the animals beneath them; the gently stimulated blood, caressing the flesh through and through with the soft vigors of health; the warm air fanning their faces, flowing over the skin with balmy and tonic touch, permeating them and bathing them subtly, with faint, sensuous delight; and the beauty of the world, more subtly still, flowing upon them and bathing them in the delight that is of the spirit and is personal and holy, that is inexpressible, yet communicable by the flash of an eye and the dissolving of the veils of the soul.

So looked they at each other, the horses bounding beneath them, the spring of the world and the spring of their youth astir in their blood, the secret of being trembling in their eyes to the brink of disclosure, as if about to dispel, with one magic word, all the unrealities and riddles of existence.

The road curved before them, so that the upper reaches of the canyon could be seen, the distant bed of it towering high above their heads. They were rounding the curve, leaning toward the inside, gazing before them at the swift-growing picture. There was no sound of warning. Lute heard nothing, but even before the horse went down, she experienced a feeling that

the unison of the two leaping animals was broken. She turned her head, and so quickly that she saw Comanche fall. It was not a stumble nor a trip. He fell as though abruptly, in mid-leap, he had died or been struck a stunning blow.

And in that moment she remembered Planchette; it seared her brain as a lightning flash of all-embracing memory. Her horse was back on its haunches, the weight of her body on the reins; but her head was turned and her eyes were on the falling Comanche. He struck the roadbed squarely, with his legs loose and lifeless beneath him.

It all occurred in one of those age-long seconds that embrace an eternity of happening. There was a slight but perceptible rebound from the impact of Comanche's body with the earth. The violence with which he struck forced the air from his great lungs in an audible groan. His momentum swept him onward and over the edge. The weight of the rider on his neck turned him over head first as he pitched to the fall.

Lute was off her horse, she knew not how, and to the edge. Her lover was out of the saddle and clear of Comanche, though held to the animal by his right foot, which was caught in the stirrup. The slope was too steep for them to come to a stop. Earth and small stones, dislodged by their struggles, were rolling down with them and before them in a miniature avalanche. She stood very quietly, holding one hand against her breast and gazing down. But while she saw the real happening, in her eyes was also the vision of her father dealing the spectral blow that had smashed Comanche down in mid-leap and sent horse and rider hurtling over the edge.

Beneath horse and man the steep terminated in an up-and-down wall, from the base of which, in turn, a second slope ran down to a second wall. A third slope terminated in a final wall that based itself on the canyon bed four hundred feet beneath the point where the girl stood and watched. She could see Chris vainly kicking his leg to free the foot from the trap of the stirrup. Comanche fetched up hard against an out-jetting point of rock. For a fraction of a second his fall was stopped, and in that slight interval the man managed to grip hold of a young shoot of manzanita. Lute saw him complete the grip with his other hand. Then Comanche's fall began again. She



saw the stirrup strap draw taut, then her lover's body and arms. The manzanita shoot yielded its roots, and horse and man plunged over the edge and out of sight.

They came into view on the next slope, together and rolling over and over, with sometimes the man under and sometimes the horse. Chris no longer struggled, and together they dashed over to the third slope. Near the edge of the final wall, Comanche lodged on a hummock of stone. He lay quietly, and near him, still attached to him by the stirrup, face downward, lay his rider.

"If only he will lie quietly," Lute breathed aloud, her mind at work on the means of rescue.

But she saw Comanche begin to struggle again and, clear on her vision, it seemed, was the spectral arm of her father clutching the reins and dragging the animal over. Comanche floundered across the hummock, the inert body following, and together,

horse and man, they plunged from sight. They did not appear again; they had fetched bottom.

Lute looked about her. She stood alone on the world—her lover was gone. There was naught to show of his existence, save the marks of Comanche's hoofs on the road and of his body where it had slid over the brink.

"Chris!" she called once, and twice; but she called hopelessly.

Out of the depths, on the windless air, arose only the murmur of bees and of running water.

"Chris!" she called yet a third time, and sank slowly down in the dust of the road.

She felt the touch of Dolly's muzzle on her arm, and she leaned her head against the mare's neck and waited. She knew not why she waited, nor for what, only there seemed nothing else but waiting left for her to do.

(The End.)

## Revelation

BY CHARLOTTE BECKER

TILL Poverty knocked at his door,  
He never knew how bare  
The uneventful days of those  
Who have but want and care.

Till Sorrow lingered at his hearth,  
He never knew the night  
Through which all troubled souls must fare,  
To gain the morning light.

Till Suffering had sought his house,  
He never knew what dread  
May wrestle with, nor what grim fears  
Of agony are bred.

And yet, till these unbidden guests  
Had taught him to possess  
A clearer sight, he never knew  
The heights of happiness.





# The Miniature

By Nancy Huston Banks  
Illustrated by Blanche Greer



**I**T was still resting on the breast of Trueman Drew's wife, although even this mere film of ivory must have weighed heavily on a heart beating as slowly and faintly as was hers. Again and again, during her illness, the nurse had asked permission to remove it, but she had refused each time, begging that it be left untouched. More than once of late there had been a silent, secret attempt to loosen the delicate gold chain holding it round her neck, but she had always resisted by means of some faintly uttered word, or barely discernible movement of the head.

And now there was no more strength left for a wordless sign of any earthly wish. She had neither stirred nor spoken for hours, lying apparently unconscious. Trueman Drew's mother had long since given up hope, and now sat on the other side of the stilled chamber, helplessly weeping, and fearing that every delayed breath might be the last. His cousin, a tall girl, stood nearer the bedside. There

were no tears in her haggard eyes, although she turned them from the white face on the pillow only to search the grave faces of the great doctors. For they were all there—the greatest in that great city—yet it was evident enough that they themselves, with all their skill and knowledge, were not entirely certain that the end had not already come. One of them, the most famous, silently bent down, gently inclining his white head close to the bosom that seemed to have ceased rising and falling. As he heard the faint, slow flutter that could not be seen, his cheek touched the miniature, and instantly, like a miracle, the waxen hands that had rested lifelessly beside the motionless form but a moment before were lifted to keep it in its place and folded to hold it still closer.

Then the mother arose with a sudden, soft rustle of garments and went out of the bedroom without a word or even a glance at the form which was again lying as motionless as ever. The cousin waited till the doctors also turned to go away.





There was nothing more for them to do, nothing left untried within mortal power. The supreme powers of science invoked by wealth and affection had all been exerted to the utmost without avail. And this decisive battle between these generals of mortality and the kingdom of terrors had been a long one, waged ceaselessly through that whole dark day. They must rest now, if only to be in readiness for formal surrender. As they passed into the larger room where the mother was waiting, she asked how long it would be.

"Her husband—my son—should be here at any moment now. But we can't tell just when, not knowing whether he has received any of our letters and telegrams. He's traveling—on business," she added hastily. "That's the reason we don't know how to reach him or just when to expect him. If we could tell how long she——"

The white-haired doctor replied in a few murmured words, and then they all bowed themselves out. Close behind them followed the nurse, who was also in need of rest and refreshment. None of them had said anything to the tall girl who had silently followed them to the threshold. There was nothing for them to say or for her to ask. She knew without their telling or her asking that there was nothing to say or do, and that they would nevertheless come again as soon as possible and continue coming so long as a faint breath fluttered from the white lips of Constance Drew. The great generals of mortality do not surrender while life lasts. And the dying are never deserted when they lie in a magnificent house.

The girl uncertainly turned from the door and went waveringly across the large room, as if walking in her sleep. Reaching the nearest of its many deep windows, she drew aside the rich curtains and looked down into the street. Her agitated, restless gaze saw nothing, although in the acutely sensitized state of her mind, the abnormal tension of her nerves, and the fevered condition of her body, she could almost hear the flight of the unseen snowflakes falling through the twilight. But her strained hearing was still following the muffled footsteps of the tired men slowly descending the heavily carpeted stairs. The distant closing of the front door behind them startled her into violent trem-

bling. Instinctively she pressed her hot face against the cold pane, again looking down into the street and trying to follow them out of sight. There was nothing to be seen distinctly even by steadier, clearer eyes than hers. Only dark and blurred shapes were dimly visible hurrying through the storm in haste to reach shelter before nightfall. For that was not far off, and this was in the middle of a bitter winter and the dark day, the stormiest of all, was now closing in wilder than ever, with the wind blowing hard and snow falling fast. The white wings of the wind shadowed the lowering sky and darkened the whitened earth. It seemed to the shivering girl that dusk's shades were pressing against the deep windows, darkening them with dank sheets.

The gloom was even deeper without than within, and feeling rather than thinking this, she turned with a shuddering sigh, letting the curtain fall and thus shutting out the last pallid daylight. Then she noiselessly crossed the room to a seat beside the wide hearth. From it she could look through the archway into the dimness of the bedroom, where there was light enough for her to see, though somewhat indistinctly, the motionless form lying on the bed. But the larger room in which she now sat down to watch and wait was better lighted with shaded lamps and by an open fire flickering with a still brighter light. On the opposite side of the hearth the mother also watched and waited in the full glow of the firelight—as if instinctively seeking such relief as bodily comfort could afford mental distress. And indeed a measure of relief seemed to have been already afforded, for the weary frame had sunk far down among the cushions of the easy chair, and the tired head resting against the cushioned back of it was certainly dozing if not sound asleep. Then, too—most mercifully—it has been ordered that there shall be a limit to age's sorrowing. Beyond the extreme boundary it is permitted that some respite at least may come from the very weakness of the old. And this gray head, resting so heavily, was grayer than it should have been, and the good face, showing so piteously in the firelight, bore the deep, fine graving that can never be graven by years alone.

But the girl merely glanced at it with a flash of scorn in her feverish eyes, feeling



only youth's hot resentment of age's saving insensibility. For with all her quick perception and aging experience she was still young and unlearned in life's lessons. It was not for her yet to comprehend how Trueman Drew's mother—who so loved her only son—could be sleeping when his wife—whom he loved more than all the rest of the world—lay dying and while he was wandering, they knew not where. She herself had not slept for many nights, and it seemed to her now that she never could sleep again, assuredly not until she had accounted to him for what she had not power to control. And what should that accounting be? Under a sudden passionate impulse she leaned across the hearth and touched the drooping shoulder almost roughly.

"What's the matter?" cried the mother, starting up in alarm and turning apprehensively toward the bedroom. "Has anything—happened? Is there any change?"

"No. But don't speak so loud." The girl's low tone was very harsh. "I wanted to know if Trueman's letter to Constance came to-day by the last mail. This is the regular time for it——"

"To-morrow—not till to-morrow," the mother sighed and shook her head. "It will come then. That's the date for its coming. But the letter will come too late this time. She can't live through the night and very soon now—will go without knowing."

"How do *we* know whether she knows or not?" the girl demanded.

"The doctors told me——"

"Oh! The doctors. They don't know any more than we do when it comes to—to that in there."

"They don't profess to." The mother's tone was gently forbearing, but slightly chilled by age's cold patience with youth's hot revolt against the immutable. "They haven't left any more medicine and don't wish her disturbed even for nourishment."

"If they knew how to nourish a starving heart they might do her some good!" the girl said bitterly. "For that's the only complaint she's suffering from. That's the only disease that she is dying of."

"Don't speak of it. Let's try not to think of it. We only torment ourselves by talking or thinking. We can't help her, poor soul!"

"Yes. Her soul, too! If the greatest surgeon of them all had ever found the trace of a soul under his scalpel, maybe he might know how to help hers."

The mother was again helplessly weeping, and could not have spoken had she wished to do so, or known what to say. But she got up and crossed the hearth and took another chair beside the girl's rigid figure. Then she put her arm around it with caressing tenderness and drew it close to her and held it until she felt the gradual relaxation of its rigidity and heard the girl's subdued sobbing.

"There! That's right," the mother said softly. "That will do you good, dear. You must never again bruise yourself beating against the unknowable. For, believe me, that is all such questioning ever does come to. I know, child, for I've questioned, too. We all do at first, but none of us ever get any answer, and after a while we grow tired of asking. Then, we haven't the strength; it takes all we have just to endure." And so, sighing and patting her niece's bowed head, she went back to the easy chair and sank heavily among the cushions.

The girl turned slowly and once more fixed her strained gaze on the motionless form lying in the dimness of the bedroom. She had not forgotten it for an instant, and her thoughts were again bound fast to be broken on the wheel of memory. For that never ceased turning and turning. The recollection hurting most at this moment was that her cousin had entrusted his wife to her care because she understood. And she had accepted the trust because she would have undertaken anything he asked her to do, and because there was no one else to assume it, no one better fitted to discharge it. Then she also had believed that she really did understand. Now, racked by doubt and tortured by failure, she was wondering if she ever had understood. She still held to her understanding of his going away, although he had never given her his reasons or told anyone what they were. There had been no need of his telling her that he went to seek the peace which he could not find in all the luxury of his home. Neither had there been any need of his confessing to her that he would set out on the long quest with no hope of finding anything sweeter than peace, since both of them, young as



they were, already knew only too well that happiness can never be found by searching over the whole world. And all other desirable things he had always possessed. In the thirty years of his life he had never wanted anything that good gifts might win, or that great wealth could bestow. He had even been happy till he had sought great happiness through marriage.

This palace was merely one of his gifts to his bride, and he had only longed to draw down the stars to light it for her. And she had given him many wonderful and rare gifts, too: all her beauty and charm and grace and culture and brilliancy and high-breeding and goodness. All these gifts taken together made a very large dowry, a much larger one indeed than most brides can bring to the altar. But then, the pity and the trouble of it was that this bride could not give the most precious gift of all—the greatest treasure that any bride can bestow upon her bridegroom—the one that the poorest bride should be able to give—the very one that the richest bridegroom values most. True-man Drew had known that his bride's great gifts lacked this pearl of great price, but he had also known that the lack was not through any fault of hers or his. Moreover, he had believed that the winged little boy would bring it later, of his own free, sweet will, and set it in the crown of their married life.

A love as serene and trusting as his, a love that gives everything and exacts nothing, must always have a strong faith in itself. If it may also have an honest conviction of its own modest worth—with a fair field and time to woo and courage to urge and patience to wait—it is never really afraid and rarely need be. True-man Drew, having all these advantages, had gone his quiet, contented, patient way without fearing at all, for nearly five years. It would be hard to tell how the first doubt came even then, or what it came from. Possibly he never knew himself. Probably there had been a gradual awakening to utter hopelessness. Certain it is that he had never spoken of any awakening of any kind to anyone, least of all to her who was even less to blame than himself. The only certainty was that despair had come while love still stayed away. With its coming, he had begun to wander, speak-

ing vaguely of business at first, then wandering without pretext, only going farther and staying longer. His wife had asked no questions and he could never be sure that his absence had given her the peace which was all that he had left either to give or take. For it had seemed to him in those first black days that the longing to give love that cannot be given must be almost as torturing as the craving for love that can never be satisfied. And that was why he had silently gone away. Yet his silence and self-sacrifice had not been able to hide the truth: the most reserved cannot live entirely unobserved: the most silent cannot keep their secrets from the eyes of their own household. The mother had suspected without understanding, and the girl had partially understood, divining much more than anyone had seen or heard or could know.

It was indeed what she had divined rather than what she had learned that was rending her very soul as she sat there beside the hearth, with her haggard face turned toward the dimness of the bedroom. All the conflict of her spirit was in the straining gaze that watched the motionless form, now with bitterness beyond all pardoning and again with tenderest forgiveness.

"If we only knew where he was!" The mother's low voice full of tears broke the silence with strange distinctness. "If we could only reach him so that he might come in time!"

"What good would that do her—or him?" The bitter question was wrung from the girl by her own pain. "It was being together that made them both miserable."

The mother straightened up and turned upon her. "Don't say that. You shall not say it—to me."

"It's true!" the girl struck back fiercely. "And he knew it."

"Nobody was to blame."

"That's the misery of it."

"He has indeed been miserable enough—without being blamed. For him to be blamed and found fault with by you——"

"I—blame *him*!" The words rushed to the girl's quivering lips before she could hold them back. "I—find fault with him!" Then she remembered and was silent for a moment, striving hard to regain her self-control. Presently she went on



more calmly: "Surely you don't mean to accuse me of misjudging Trueman? I've known him too long and too well for that. I've known him longer than she has—and better, too"—with a sudden fierce note in her soft, slow tone. "I can't remember when I didn't know him better than anybody else ever knew him, nor when everything he did wasn't perfect in my eyes."

"Forgive me, dear," said the mother, softening at once, leaning forward and laying her hand on the rigid arm. "I am in such distress that I hardly know what I say. Of course I remember how close together you and he have always been. Why, long before we ever heard of her, I used to think and hope——"

The girl got up hastily and went swiftly to the archway and looked into the dimness surrounding the bed, standing still so long that the mother grew uneasy and came to stand beside her, resting an arm on her shoulder. But there was no change for either of them to see and they noiselessly returned to their chairs, merely drawing closer together.

"You saw the miniature—still in her hands," the girl said suddenly and bitterly.

The mother sighed. "That's the reason I left the room before the doctors had gone. I couldn't stay and see that. It was more than I could endure, seeing another man's face on the breast of my son's wife—held there after he had been forgotten."

"She has always worn it. We've never seen her without it," the girl said, relenting.

"That only makes the wrong greater. No wife ever has a right to cherish—much less wear—the picture of a lover who isn't her husband."

"Ernest Wright would have been hers if he had lived only a day longer."

"But he died," the mother said, with the gentlest mother's hardness in behalf of her own child. "And she married my boy—a finer man."

This was not for the girl to gainsay, and she sat silent without moving, or lifting her eyes from the sinking fire.

"And a handsomer man, too!" challenged the mother, raising herself higher among the cushions so that she might look round for the assent which her tone demanded. But the girl merely shook her head till compelled to speak, and then she

murmured that she could not say, never having seen Ernest Wright.

"Of course you never saw him," the mother cried peevishly. "How could you see him—or I either—when he died before we ever heard of him or her? And a sad day it was for all of us when we did hear. But you've certainly seen that miniature often enough to know it by heart as well as I do, and you know how Trueman looks——"

"I've seen *him* look at the miniature often and long enough!" the girl said, with a returning surge of bitterness.

"So have I! So have I many a time! And every look he ever gave it made me hate it worse and worse. From the very first, on the very morning that she came through the front door, a bride——"

"Yes. It came into the house with her—openly on her breast for all to see. We are bound to remember that." The girl's tone was vibrant.

"Why do you tell me that? Didn't I see it before I saw her? Didn't I hate it with all my heart before I knew whose likeness it was? A mother doesn't have to know—where her son is concerned. She feels without knowing."

"But Trueman knew. She had told him." The girl's sense of justice was speaking now. "For he told me—after she had refused him the first time—when he came back to me. He spoke of it to justify her. Then it was quite like old times between us for a long time, and only natural that he should tell me."

But the mother hardly heard and broke in, driven by rising excitement to express thoughts and feelings which had rankled silently for nearly five years. "It doesn't matter what he told you. His allowing her to wear the miniature only made her doing so unseemly a thing that much the more unpardonable. And his never saying a word, or letting me say one, couldn't keep me from hating it either! Why, that's the very reason I *did* hate it! It was just for his sake that I hated it—just because he was too high-minded and generous-spirited and noble-hearted to hate it on his own account. That's the reason I was jealous of it, too. I'm not ashamed to admit being jealous of it—just because he couldn't condescend to be jealous of it for himself."

"Men are less prone than women





to be jealous of the dead," the girl said.

"Then I got to hating its very looks, and would have hated it just the same—good or bad."

"It must be a good likeness. She must have thought so——"

"There's nothing handsome about it to me," the mother went on, finding infinite relief in speaking at last. "I can see it now—with my eyes shut. I know as well how Ernest Wright looked as if I'd known him in life. He had reddish chestnut hair waving around his broad, white forehead in a peculiar way that gave it a square look: he had clear-cut, clean-shaven features that were paler than any man's ought to be, and his full lips were always too red: then he had large dark eyes with a curiously level, steady look—half smiling, half wistful, and wholly inscrutable."

"Yes, he must have looked like that," the girl said absently, for her thoughts had wandered from the miniature.

"Well, then compare his looks with my son's," the mother challenged again. "There's nothing strange in *his* appearance. His wholesome face—comely, brown, bearded, and clear-eyed—is a good, open book for anybody to read. In every respect—body, mind, and heart—my son, Trueman Drew, is a man that any woman might love and be proud of." The poor old head held itself very proudly indeed, the dim old eyes were almost blinded by tears, but they suddenly flashed with pride, and the shaking old hand made a prideful gesture toward the bedroom. "Why shouldn't she have loved him? How could any woman *help* loving him?"

How indeed! Yet the girl sat silent, still looking into the fire with lowered eyes.

"Why don't you say what you think?" The mother's righteous indignation suddenly turned into peevish wretchedness. "Nobody knows the truth of it all better than you do."

"But nobody can love, or cease loving, as may be best." The girl spoke as she might have struck—in self-defense. "Then,

Constance never tried to deceive him. She told him the truth—told him that she did not and could not love him, or anyone, because her power of loving had died with Ernest Wright."

"Then why did she marry my son?" the mother demanded in growing bitterness. "She took plenty of time to know her own mind. She needn't have married him unless she wished. Certainly there was no coercion. Sometimes I've thought—and it's been like wormwood—that her people may have influenced her. None are ever so poor, or so hungry for money, as decayed aristocrats."

"Oh, no! It wasn't that," the girl said quickly, moved again by her sense of justice. "She would never have married him if he had not persuaded her that it would make him happy, and if she had not persuaded herself that she could not be more unhappy than she was. You see, she couldn't know till she had tried, and he couldn't know either till it was too late."

"Perhaps if there had been a child——"

"No!" The girl's sharp, low cry rang out as if under a blow. "That would only have made everything worse. If a woman doesn't love a man before, she must hate him——"

"A mere slip of a girl like you should not speak of sacred things that she cannot understand." Motherhood and wifehood up in arms sternly confronted the offender. "Take care. Beware of rushing in. No girl——"

"But I'm a woman," the girl cried, springing up and turning to face the mother with excited recklessness. "And I've surely seen enough of marriage—more than enough of this one's unhappiness—to think of some remedy. It has certainly needed all the thinking about that we could all give it. And I have thought of everything—even of a child," with a bitter little smile. "Most well-meaning people do think of it, I believe in these sad cases."







here was no mistaking the  
face she was looking at.

. . . . .





"Hush, child! Don't talk foolishly."

"This is wisdom, not folly," the girl persisted, more calmly. "It's the people that talk about the child that are foolish. There never was a greater or more common error. A child cannot draw an unloving husband and wife closer together. It can only hold them—sometimes—when they would otherwise part. But it oftener comes between husband and wife when they do love each other. There is a natural rivalry between the love for a child and the love for husband and wife. One must be sacrificed to the other."

"You don't know in the least what you are talking about." The mother spoke angrily now. "If Trueman only had a child——"

The girl stopped her with a sort of hushed violence. "You think he would have been happier in seeing her love a child—even his own—knowing that she had no love for him?"

"Say what you please!" the mother retorted. "He loves her so much that he never thinks of himself at all. He would have been happy in anything that could have brought her happiness. If he would only come!" The weak voice suddenly began to break into fretful grieving. "If he might only be here now! He loves her so! He loves her so!"

"You want him to come and see how it is—in there now?" The cruel words cried out from the girl's intolerable suffering. "You want him to see her clinging in death to Ernest Wright's miniature?"

The mother wrung her hands and rocked back and forth. "I don't know what I want—or say. I am utterly distracted! And you are quarreling with me, instead of trying to help me."

The girl, moved by a tender impulse, bent down and kissed her.

"But you will help me, won't you?" the mother clung to her. "You will help me get that hateful thing out of sight? For he may come at any moment. We don't know—and can't tell. Think of some way to hide the miniature."

The girl shrank and shook her head, but she turned and looked toward the next room with signs of yielding in her pale, tear-wet face.

The mother was quick to see these signs through her own tears. "For Trueman's sake!" she entreated. "Try—for his dear

sake. He's dear to you, too. Try to get the miniature away—so that we may hide it. Maybe you could draw it away very slowly and softly from under her hands. They are only crossed over it. She can't hold anything very firmly now—poor thing!"

There was another breathless pause, one more moment of shrinking indecision, and then the girl moved silently and swiftly to the archway. Under it she paused, striving to subdue the trembling of her limbs, the plunging of her heart, and the quivering of her nerves. Then she went into the gloom beyond and close up to the bedside and stood there in silence, looking down for a long time. At last she came out and noiselessly returned to her seat beside the hearth. But she had made no attempt to loosen the waxen fingers, no effort to rob them of their treasure. Her heart had failed her and she had, in truth, hardly thought of the miniature in the feelings that had surged over her. She had no excuse to make and could not explain. Indeed, when she looked across the hearth at the mother she saw that no excuse or explanation would be required, for the time being at least. For the weakness of age was again giving surcease of sorrow. Already the gray head was resting and the grieving lips were silent in momentary forgetfulness.

Thus set free and left alone, the girl turned to face the last great mystery, for she had felt its near presence in that darkened chamber. She had been quiveringly conscious of its following her from the bedroom into this larger room, filling it and pressing upon her, deepening and spreading till it was now brooding over the whole house in a vast pall of stillness, the strange, tense, unfathomable stillness that falls—over palace and hovel alike—when the quick and the dead are coming closest together.

And this unseen meeting was close indeed now. She could feel the last great mystery standing at her very side—within reach of her hand—and revolted at not being able to see what she knew was there. For she was not in the least afraid: she was much too unhappy for fear. Disappointment in this world has freed many a woman from fear of the next one. Young as this girl was, she had not found happiness enough here to make her indifferent to



happiness hereafter, or render her fearful of greater unhappiness. And thus it was that she sat watching and waiting—the courage of her spirit wholly undaunted by the quailing of her body—striving with passionate eagerness to hear the inaudible and see the invisible. That was the supreme, overwhelming desire which had caused her to forget everything else at the bedside. It had been all she could do to keep from appealing to those white lips, imploring them to tell her one word—just one word—of the truth that has never been told. The woman lying on the bed must know it now—if any ever do. Surely she must be closer to the other world than to this. Yes, at this very moment she must be lifting the invisible curtain which brushed her face.

Now—if ever—there might be a glimpse behind it! The girl bent still farther forward with her strong soul straining hard against the bonds of flesh. Assuredly not the slightest sign or the faintest sound could escape! Her very lips were a little apart as if to breathe what her eyes could not see and her ears could not hear. And when there did come a sound, sudden and sharp, her parted, panting lips could not hold back a smothered cry. Yet, even as she uttered it, she knew that there was nothing more than the breaking of a firebrand with a shower of sparks and a flare of flame.

The mother, awakened and frightened, started up, but before she could turn to look, or find voice to ask what it was, she and the girl together heard the welcome sound of footsteps on the stairs. There was immediate and intense relief to them both in hearing any sound of life in that brooding stillness.

"It's the nurse coming back—at last." The mother settled down, sighing fretfully. "She has stayed away much too long. It isn't so—so strange—and dreadful—when she is in there."

"That can't be the nurse." The girl spoke with difficulty, finding it hard to bring herself back so quickly from so far off. "She comes downstairs. Those footsteps are coming up. It must be somebody else."

"Trueman!" The mother leaped to her feet, staggering, and caught the girl's arm in a convulsive grasp. "Did you get—that hateful thing—and hide it?"

"No! no! That isn't Trueman. Don't be alarmed." The girl spoke gently, but she was trying to release her arm.

"You don't know——"

"But I *do* know! And it isn't Trueman. I would know his step on the other side of the world. That is only one of the doctors coming before the others."

"Yes, of course," the mother assented faintly, feeling spent and weak. "It's full time they were coming, too. But I didn't hear the opening or shutting of the front door."

"That was because the firebrand broke just at the same moment and startled us both. Listen! There's the doctor coming round the turn of the stairs straight up to this door. How curiously distinct his footfalls are!"

"Well, everything sounds loud and strange now. But don't let him open the door," the mother complained. "The doctors always manage to let it make a wailing noise that I can't bear—as I feel now. Hurry and open it for him before he gets there."

The girl went swiftly and opened the door. There was plenty of light in the wide hall, but the doctor was not yet in sight. She stood waiting and listening to his slow approach, wondering what delayed him so long. At a murmur from the fireside she turned her head, and when she looked back again a man was standing at the top of the stairs, almost within arm's length.

But it was not one of the doctors. This was a stranger, a young, tall, slender, and handsome man whom the girl had never seen before, yet whose face she instantly recognized. She screamed without knowing that she made a sound, and, staggering back, blindly caught at the side of the door, to keep from falling.

The mother came running, and after a single glance she also cried out, recoiling and covering her ashen face with her shaking hands.

But the girl and the man looked steadily at each other. There was no mistaking the face that she was looking at. There was the same reddish chestnut hair waving around the broad, white forehead in the same peculiar way that gave it a square look; there were the same clear-cut, clean-shaven features of unnatural pallor and with full red lips; and—most unmistakable





of all—there were those same large, dark eyes with their curiously level, steady gaze—half smiling and half wistful and wholly inscrutable.

Marveling, the girl almost ceased fearing. In thus gazing into the depths of those fathomless eyes, she felt that she was in truth seeing behind the invisible curtain. Yet suddenly it seemed to her that she saw a gleam of mockery, a flash of defiance, an expression of triumph. This might have been only her fevered imagination, but it was real enough to bring her loyal courage above all fear of the unknown. She stretched her arms across the doorway—still guarding her trust.

But the mother was fainting, and in sinking to the floor she caught at the girl's skirt and dragged her backward and bore her downward. She could not release herself from those stiffened fingers quickly enough to rise and try to prevent the man from entering the room. Ere she could even turn to look at him she felt his passing, and when she got to her knees she distinctly saw him disappearing through the archway into the dimness. Desperately she tried to follow him at once. A great

rage of faithfulness maddened her. She wrenched and tore at her garments which were pinned down by the weight of the mother's prostrate, senseless form. At last she rent them free and ran the length of the long room and toward the bedroom. If need be she would struggle over the very deathbed for Trueman's sake. For his sake she would strive for his wife's departing soul. She would stake her own soul against the combined powers of light and darkness, rather than have him find her unfaithful.

But— She was already in the bedroom, at the very bedside—and no one was there! She knelt down beside the bed and laid her head upon the quiet breast, but she could not hear the faintest flutter of life's wings. Her feverish cheek shrank from the cold touch of the miniature and she sprang up, looking slowly around the chamber and searching its dimmest corner. There were only shadows—no one in that large, still chamber—no one alive but herself. Even Trueman Drew's wife was gone. There was only a beautiful image, like sculptured marble, lying on the bed—only a radiant mask of a lovely face shining from the pillow.







# Drawn From Life



Short Stories of Human Interest,  
Romantic, Tragic, and Fanciful

## The Other Lodgers

By Ambrose Bierce

**I**N order to take that train," said Colonel Levering, sitting in the Waldorf-Astoria hotel, "you will have to remain nearly all night in Atlanta. That is a fine city, but I advise you not to put up at the Brathitt House, one of the principal hotels. It is an old wooden building in urgent need of repairs. There are breaches in the walls that you could throw a cat through. The bedrooms have no locks on the doors, no furniture but a single chair in each and a bedstead without bedding—just a mattress. Even these meager accommodations you cannot be sure that you will have in monopoly; you must take your chance of being stowed in with a lot of others. Sir, it is a most abominable hotel.

"The night that I passed there was an uncomfortable night. I got in late and was shown to my room, on the ground floor, by an apologetic night-clerk with a tallow candle, which he considerably left with me. I was worn out by two days and a night of hard railway travel, and had not entirely recovered from a gunshot wound in the head received in an altercation. Rather than look for better quarters I lay down on the mattress without removing my clothing and fell asleep.

"Along toward morning I awoke. The moon had risen and was shining in at the uncurtained window, illuminating the room with a soft, bluish light which seemed, somehow, a bit uncanny, though I dare say it had no uncommon quality; all moonlight is that way if you will observe it. You can imagine my surprise and indignation when I saw the floor occupied by at least a dozen other lodgers! I sat up,

audibly damning the management of that unthinkable hotel, and was about to spring from the bed to go to make trouble for the night-clerk—him of the apologetic manner and the tallow candle—when something in the situation affected me with a strange indisposition to move. I suppose I was what a story-writer might call 'frozen with terror.' For those men were obviously all dead!

"They lay on their backs, disposed orderly along three sides of the room, their feet to the walls—against the other wall, farthest from the door, stood my bed and the chair. Every face was covered, but under their white cloths the features of the two bodies which lay in the square patch of moonlight near the window showed with a sharp and ghastly definition. The clothing of some was freaked and gouted with blood.

"I thought this a horrible dream and tried to cry out, as one does in a nightmare, but could make no sound. At last, with a desperate effort, I threw my feet to the floor, and, passing between the two rows of clouted faces and the two bodies that lay nearest the door, escaped from the infernal place and ran to the office. The night-clerk was there, behind the desk, sitting in the dim light of another tallow candle—just sitting and staring. He did not rise: my abrupt entrance produced no effect upon him, though I must have looked a veritable corpse myself. It occurred to me then that I had not before really observed the fellow. He was a little chap, with a colorless face and the whitest, blankest eyes I ever saw. He had no more expression than the back of my hand. His clothing was a dirty gray.

"'Damn you!' I said; 'what does this mean?'

"Just the same, I was shaking like a



leaf in the wind and did not recognize my own voice.

"The night-clerk rose, bowed (apologetically) and—well, he was no longer there, and at that moment I felt a hand laid upon my shoulder from behind. Just fancy that if you can! Inexpressibly frightened, I turned and saw a portly, kind-faced gentleman, who asked,

"What is the matter, my friend?"

"I was not long in telling him, but before I made an end of it he went pale himself. 'See here,' he said, 'are you telling the truth?'"

"I had now got myself in hand and terror had given place to indignation. 'If you doubt it,' I said, 'I'll hammer the life out of you!'"

"No," he replied, 'don't do that; just sit down till I tell you. This is not a hotel. It used to be; then it was a hospital. The room that you mention was the dead-room—there were always plenty of dead. The fellow that you call the night-clerk used to be that, but later he booked the patients as they were brought in. I don't understand his being here. He has been dead a few weeks.'

"And who are you?" I blurted out.

"Oh, I look after the premises. I happened to be passing just now, and seeing a light in here came in to investigate. Let us have a look into that room," he added, lifting the sputtering candle from the desk.

"I'll see you at the devil first!" said I, bolting out of the door into the street.

"Sir, that Brathitt House, in Atlanta, is a beastly place! Don't you stop there."

"God forbid! Your account of it certainly does not suggest the Waldorf-Astoria. By the way, Colonel, when did all that occur?"

"In September, 1864—shortly after the siege."

## Her Highness

By J. J. Bell

THE princess walked rapidly until she came to the opening in the low hedge leading to the pansy garden. Then she walked slowly. It was early, and the sunshine caught the dew everywhere.

On his knees, at a plot of creamy pansies, an under-gardener was working. The plot may have required a little tidying, but no

more. It almost seemed as if the under-gardener, who was young and far from ill looking, were wasting his own and his employer's time.

"Good morning," said the princess as she drew near.

"Good morning, your highness," returned the under-gardener, removing his cap and rising. It seemed to him that the princess was less cheerful than usual.

"Please go on with what you were doing," said the princess. "We talk better when you are working."

"As your highness pleases," he replied, and laying his cap aside bent again, bare-headed, over the plot.

A tiny frown wrinkled the princess' brow, just between the eyes. "Please put on your cap; the sun is hot," she said.

"I thank your highness." The young man covered his thick dark hair.

Presently he selected a dozen perfect pansies, added a large bright-green ivy leaf, which he had apparently provided for the purpose, deftly tied leaf and blooms together, and gave the little bunch to the princess, whose ungloved hand was waiting for it.

"Thank you," she said, and fixed the bunch in her belt.

The under-gardener glanced at his flowers lying against her white blouse. Yesterday they had been dusky-violet colored, the day before, lavender, the day before that they had been . . .

"I have been wondering," remarked the princess, "what you thought of Edgar Nevison's verses; that is, if you have had time to read them." She referred to a book which she had given him a few days earlier. During the summer she had given him a number of books.

"They interested me, your highness. You see, I knew Nevison at Oxford. He was——" The under-gardener halted abruptly, flushing under his sun-tan.

"Ah!" exclaimed the princess, with a smile. "Did you take a degree at Oxford?"

"Yes, your highness," he said unwillingly.

"Does Oxford confer degrees in horticulture?"

"Your highness!" he protested.

The princess smiled kindly. "Forgive me, but you betray yourself in some way every time I come into this garden. Would





## A WINE OF WIZARDRY

BY GEORGE STERLING  
DECORATIONS BY F. I. BENNETT.

Mr. James Bryce, author of "The American Commonwealth," and British ambassador to the United States, in a widely quoted interview recently implied that this country lacked poets. The Cosmopolitan offers the following remarkable



JAMES BRYCE

poem as proof that there is at least one poet in America. Mr. Ambrose Bierce discusses the verses in another part of this issue. Obviously Mr. Bryce had not read Mrs. Ella Wheeler Wilcox's splendid poem, "Abelard and Heloise."

WITHOUT, the battlements of sunset shine,  
Mid domes the sea-winds rear and overwhelm.  
Into a crystal cup the dusky wine  
I pour, and, musing at so rich a shrine,  
I watch the star that haunts its ruddy gloom.  
Now Fancy, empress of a purpled realm,  
Awakes with brow caressed by poppy-bloom,  
And wings in sudden dalliance her flight  
To strands where opals of the shattered light  
Gleam in the wind-strewn foam, and maidens flee  
A little past the striving billows' reach,  
Or seek the russet mosses of the sea,  
And wrinkled shells that lure along the beach,





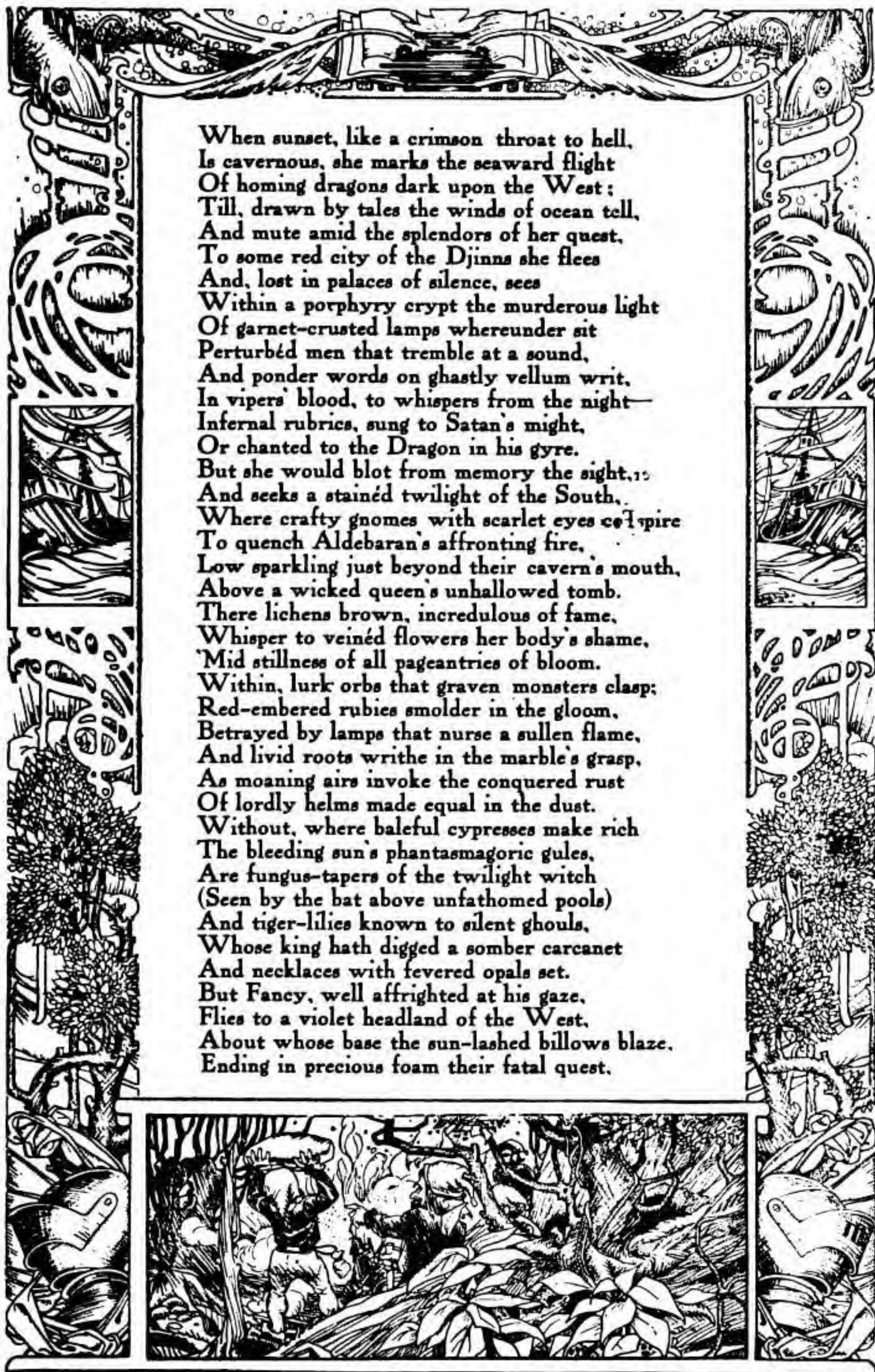
And please the heart of Fancy : yet she turns,  
 Tho' trembling, to a grotto rosy-sparred,  
 Where wattle monsters redly gape, that guard  
 A cowed magician peering on the damned  
 Thro' vials wherein a splendid poison burns,  
 Sifting Satanic gules athwart his brow.  
 So Fancy will not gaze with him, and now  
 She wanders to an iceberg oriflammed  
 With rayed, auroral guidons of the North—  
 Wherein hath winter hidden ardent gems  
 And treasures of frozen anadems,  
 Alight with timid sapphires of the snow.  
 But she would dream of warmer gems, and so  
 Erelong her eyes in fastnesses look forth  
 O'er blue profounds mysterious whence glow  
 The coals of Tartarus on the moonless air,  
 As Titans plan to storm Olympus' throne,  
 Mid pulse of dungeoned forges down the stunned,  
 Undominated firmament, and glare  
 Of Cyclopean furnaces unsunned.

Then hastens she in refuge to a lone,  
 Immortal garden of the eastern hours,  
 Where Dawn upon a pansy's breast hath laid  
 A single tear, and whence the wind hath flown  
 And left a silence. Far on shadowy tow'rs  
 Droop blazoned banners, and the woodland shade,  
 With leafy flames and dyes autumnal hung,  
 Makes beautiful the twilight of the year.  
 For this the fays will dance, for elfin cheer,  
 Within a dell where some mad girl hath flung  
 A bracelet that the painted lizards fear—  
 Red pyres of muffled light! Yet Fancy spurns  
 The revel, and to eastern hazard turns,  
 And glaring beacons of the Soldan's shores,  
 When in a Syrian treasure-house she pours,  
 From caskets rich and amethystine urns,  
 Dull fires of dusty jewels that have bound  
 The brows of naked Ashtaroth around ;  
 Or hushed, at fall of some disastrous night.








When sunset, like a crimson throat to hell,  
 Is cavernous, she marks the seaward flight  
 Of homing dragons dark upon the West;  
 Till, drawn by tales the winds of ocean tell,  
 And mute amid the splendors of her quest,  
 To some red city of the Djinns she flees  
 And, lost in palaces of silence, sees  
 Within a porphyry crypt the murderous light  
 Of garnet-cruised lamps whereunder sit  
 Perturbed men that tremble at a sound,  
 And ponder words on ghastly vellum writ,  
 In vipers' blood, to whispers from the night—  
 Infernal rubrics, sung to Satan's might,  
 Or chanted to the Dragon in his gyre.  
 But she would blot from memory the sight,<sup>15</sup>  
 And seeks a stained twilight of the South,  
 Where crafty gnomes with scarlet eyes conspire  
 To quench Aldebaran's affronting fire,  
 Low sparkling just beyond their cavern's mouth,  
 Above a wicked queen's unhallowed tomb.  
 There lichens brown, incredulous of fame,  
 Whisper to veined flowers her body's shame,  
 'Mid stillness of all pageantries of bloom.  
 Within, lurk orbs that graven monsters clasp;  
 Red-embered rubies smolder in the gloom,  
 Betrayed by lamps that nurse a sullen flame,  
 And livid roots writhe in the marble's grasp,  
 As moaning airs invoke the conquered rust  
 Of lordly helms made equal in the dust.  
 Without, where baleful cypresses make rich  
 The bleeding sun's phantasmagoric gules,  
 Are fungus-tapers of the twilight witch  
 (Seen by the bat above unfathomed pools)  
 And tiger-lilies known to silent ghouls,  
 Whose king hath dugged a somber carcanet  
 And necklaces with fevered opals set.  
 But Fancy, well affrighted at his gaze,  
 Flies to a violet headland of the West,  
 About whose base the sun-lashed billows blaze,  
 Ending in precious foam their fatal quest.








As far below the deep-hued ocean molds,  
 With waters' toil and polished pebbles' fret,  
 The tiny twilight in the jacinth set,  
 The wintry orb the moonstone-crystal holds,  
 Snapt coral twigs and winy agates wet,  
 Translucencies of jasper, and the folds  
 Of banded onyx, and vermilion breast  
 Of cinnabar. Anear on orange sands,  
 With prows of bronze, the sea-stained galleys rest,  
 And swarthy mariners from alien strands  
 Stare at the red horizon, for their eyes  
 Behold a beacon burn on evening skies,  
 As fed with sanguine oils at touch of night.  
 Forth from that pharos-flame a radiance flies  
 To spill in vinous gleams on ruddy decks,  
 And overside, when leap the startled waves  
 And crimson bubbles rise from battle-wrecks,  
 Unresting hydras wrought of bloody light  
 Dip to the ocean's phosphorescent caves.

So Fancy's carvel seeks an isle afar;  
 Led by the Scorpion's rubescent star,  
 Until in templed zones she smiles to see  
 Black incense glow, and scarlet-bellied snakes  
 Sway to the tawny flutes of sorcery.  
 There priestesses in purple robes hold each  
 A sultry garnet to the sea-linkt sun,  
 Or, just before the colored morning shakes  
 A splendor on the ruby-sanded beach,  
 Cry unto Betelguese a mystic word.  
 But Fancy, amorous of evening, takes  
 Her flight to groves whence lustrous rivers run,  
 Thro' hyacinth, a minster wall to gird,  
 Where, in the hushed cathedral's jeweled gloom,  
 Ere Faith return, and azure censers fume,  
 She kneels, in solemn quietudes, to mark  
 The suppliant day from gorgeous oriels float  
 And altar-lamps immure the deathless spark;  
 Till, all her dreams made rich with fervent hues,





She goes to watch, beside a lurid moat,  
 The kingdoms of the afterglow suffuse  
 A sentinel mountain stationed toward the night—  
 Whose broken tombs betray their ghastly trust,  
 Till bloodshot gems stare up like eyes of lust.  
 And now she knows, at agate portals bright,  
 How Circe and her poisons have a home,  
 Carved in one ruby that a Titan lost,  
 Where icy philters brim with scarlet foam,  
 'Mid hiss of oils in burnished caldrons tossed,  
 While thickly from her prey his life-tide drips,  
 In turbid dyes that tinge her torture-dome  
 As craftily she gleans her deadly dew,  
 With gyving spells not Pluto's queen can use,  
 Or listens to her victim's moan, and sips  
 Her darkest wine, and smiles with wicked lips.  
 Nor comes a god with any power to break  
 The red alembics whence her gleaming broths  
 Obscenely fume, as asp or adder froths,  
 To lethal mists whose writhing vapors make  
 Dim augury, till shapes of men that were  
 Point, weeping, at tremendous dooms to be,  
 When pillared pomps and thrones supreme shall stir,  
 Unstable as the foam-dreams of the sea.

But Fancy still is fugitive, and turns  
 To caverns where a demon altar burns,  
 And Satan, yawning on his brazen seat,  
 Fondles a screaming thing his fiends have flayed,  
 Ere Lilith come his indolence to greet,  
 Who leads from hell his whitest queens, arrayed  
 In chains so heated at their master's fire  
 That one new-damned had thought their bright attire  
 Indeed were coral, till the dazzling dance  
 So terribly that brilliance shall enhance.  
 But Fancy is unsatisfied, and soon  
 She seeks the silence of a vaster night,  
 Where powers of wizardry, with faltering sight  
 (Whenas the hours creep farthest from the noon)  
 Seek by the glow-worm's lantern cold and dull





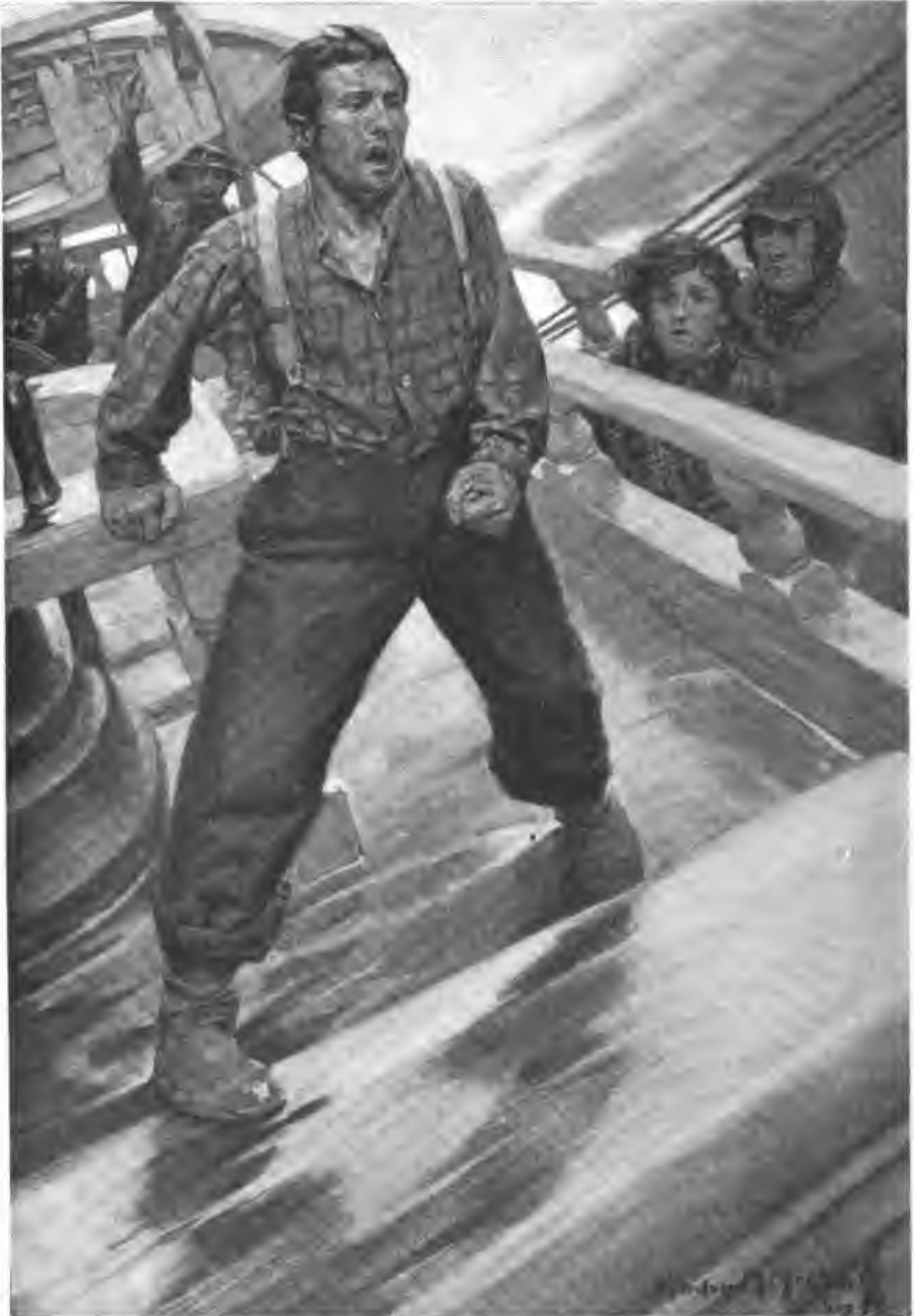
A crimson spider hidden in a skull,  
 Or search for mottled vines with berries white,  
 Where waters mutter to the gibbous moon.  
 There, clothed in cerements of malignant light,  
 A sick enchantress scans the dark to curse,  
 Beside a caldron vext with harlots' blood,  
 The stars of that red Sign which spells her doom.

Then Fancy cleaves the palmy skies adverse  
 To sunset barriers. By the Ganges' flood  
 She sees, in her dim temple, Siva loom  
 And, visioned with a monstrous ruby, glare  
 On distant twilight where the burning-ghaut  
 Is lit with glowering pyres that seem the eyes  
 Of her abhorrent dragon-worms that bear  
 The pestilence by Death in darkness wrought.  
 So Fancy's wings forsake the Asian skies,  
 And now her heart is curious of halls  
 In which dead Merlin's prowling ape hath spilt  
 A vial squat whose scarlet venom crawls  
 To ciphers bright and terrible, that tell  
 The sins of demons and the encharneled guilt  
 That breathes a phantom at whose cry the owl,  
 Malignly mute above the midnight well,  
 Is dolorous, and Hecate lifts her cowl  
 To mutter swift a minatory rune;  
 And, ere the tomb-thrown echoings have ceased,  
 The blue-eyed vampire, sated at her feast,  
 Smiles bloodily against the leprous moon.

But evening now is come, and Fancy folds  
 Her splendid plumes, nor any longer holds  
 Adventurous quest o'er stained lands and seas—  
 Fled to a star above the sunset leas,  
 O'er onyx waters stilled by gorgeous oils  
 That toward the twilight reach emblazoned coils.  
 And I, albeit Merlin-sage hath said,  
 "A vyper lurketh in ye wine-cuppe redde,"  
 Gaze pensively upon the way she went,  
 Drink at her font, and smile as one content.







THERE WAS JIM BESIDE THE MIZZENMAST, BAREHEADED AND ERECT. "READY ABOUT," HE HAD SAID IN THAT BORROWED VOICE. "HARD ALEE!" (*"The Twins"*)





# The Twins

By Morgan Robertson

Illustrated by Gordon M. McCouch



MY acquaintance with them began, I may say, about fifteen years before their birth; for I had played marbles with their father, made mud pies with their mother, thrashed the former through his school-days, and loved the latter from the beginning to the end—which is not yet. Finally, I had officiated as best man at the wedding.

The twins were as like as two peas, and to preserve their identity the usual expedient was tried of decorating them with ribbons of different hue. But when, at three years of age, they were detected in the very natural act of swapping ribbons, I, as the family physician, was called in; then Jack's identity was fixed with a tattooed dot of india ink on his left arm, and Jim's with a corresponding dot on his right. Their mother was mostly concerned with their pain and protesting squalls, their father with my wonderful ingenuity, and I with the rebellious, yet imperious, thought that, according to the eternal fitness of things, I should have been the father of these two beautiful boys.

Their father was about my age, twenty-five, and a weakling; one who, as a boy, could never catch a ball nor throw one straight; who never learned to swim, and preferred girls for playmates; who, as a youth, could not dress himself without assistance; who never, in his whole lackadaisical life, had an original thought or took the initiative in any proceeding; and why that splendid, healthy-minded, dark-eyed girl of seventeen should choose him out of a host of suitors was beyond my comprehension at the time. Later, I understood;

somewhat weakly sexed at that age, but largely endowed with the maternal instinct (she played with dolls until within a year of her marriage), she pitied his helplessness and married him to mother and protect him. And from this pair, so utterly diverse, Mother Nature produced two perfect specimens of humanity, and rested. After their arrival the parents drifted apart, and from sheer incompatibility were divorced when the boys were seven years old. They went to their original homes at opposite sides of the town, each taking a twin; for the asinine judge, unable to decide in favor of either, had, Solomon-like, so conditioned the divorce.

Their grief was heart-rending—equaled only by that of the mother, as I, in my professional relation to each home, had full opportunity to judge. But time softened this grief in all of them, and brought about in the mother a state of mind exceedingly valuable and gratifying to me. In a year from the divorce she became my wife. So far I had observed the development of the twins as a physician, noting that the measles, mumps, croup, and other childhood ailments came to both at the same time, and, as a physician, ascribing it to bodily contagion. But now, still a physician to each, I took note of other concurrent happenings that spoke of mental contagion as well. I was called to Jim late one afternoon by the agitated father, and found him in a strange mental condition, crying and laughing, and again storming in an ecstasy of rage at the house-dog, a gentle, harmless collie and a former pet, against whom he had conceived a violent hatred. He had attacked and nearly killed him with a club.

When I reached home that evening I was



regaled by the joyous Jack with an account of his successful battle that afternoon with a mad dog that had attacked him. It was a large, black mongrel, and he had brained it with his ball-club. I sounded his emotions. Frightened? Of course; who would not be with a huge mad brute, frothing at the mouth, charging at him? But he had staggered the animal with the first blow, and then had come his courage, his anger, and his furious desire to kill, and save his life. Yes, he had cried, afterward, and was much ashamed of the weakness. But I reassured him on this point, convinced him that strong, brave men sometimes cried under extreme excitement, and in my desire to make the most of the incident in his development, almost overshot the mark. His self-respect became abnormal, and neighboring dogs and small boys suffered, until he was stopped by an experience more salutary than would have been the strapping which his mother and I were seriously contemplating. He attacked another dog, but a sane dog of small size and attending to his business. This dog met the assault bravely and, though suffering keenly from Jack's first blow and unable to injure any living thing larger than a rabbit, offered a strong protest of growls and barks, the moral effect of which was to send the small boy fleeing for home with the small dog snapping at his heels. The neighbors rejoiced, and it was a month before Jack recovered from the humiliation. He did not understand, nor did I until the following day, when his father informed me on the street that the collie, recovered in mind and body, had revenged himself by attacking and biting Jim, who was badly frightened and needed my attention. I could not learn that there was concomitance of time, but I knew that the twins, a mile apart, *shared each other's emotions*.

After a fruitless attempt to get legal transfer of Jim to my own household, I fell back on my growing faith in this sympathy of mind, trusting that a careful training of Jack might have a corresponding influence upon Jim. But in this I hoped too much. No such sympathy is ever as strong as daily and personal contact, and the direct and weakening example of that father's life and words worked powerfully upon the character of the boy. His individuality lessened, and as though this lessening were an invitation, the apparently fortuitous incidents and

influences of his life became such as to lessen it still further. He seemed to be looking for trouble, and would attempt feats that he failed to perform, while Jack attempted such as were just within his increasing powers. A boy that Jack had pummeled came around and took revenge on Jim. He would yield to pressure that Jack would resist.

And so they grew farther and farther apart in face, form, and disposition, Jack into a tall, straight, handsome, and high-minded young gentleman, Jim into a shifty, cowardly, stoop-shouldered, and cad-like sort of a youth, without friends, ambition, or ideals, whose backwardness in study brought him into the lowest class of the town's one high school as Jack entered the highest. In this year of schooling they met for the first time since the separation, but they met as strangers. They knew they were brothers, of course, but carefully avoided reference to the fact, and soon avoided each other. Between them there was no outward sympathy nor community of interest, the unwise but cast-iron pride of the mother finding expression in Jack's attitude, and the cowardice of the negative father in Jim's.

Jack graduated with honor, and, confronted with another four years of study at college, yet ardent, ambitious, anxious to begin life's battle as a man, chose a career that satisfied both conditions—a life in the navy. He arranged matters himself, secured an appointment to the Naval Academy, and left us. And on that day, Jim, friendless in school and stubborn, was dismissed from school for negligence in his studies. Then, as though his evil star were now at its zenith, his father, having lost all his inherited property in unwise speculation, took him away, where I could not learn; but a year later we read the list of lost in a coasting-steamship wreck, and in this list were the names of these two.

I now had to deal with a half-crazed woman, who spoke little and did not weep, but whose strained face and whitening hair told of the strength of that misplaced pride and outraged mother-love, suppressed for so many years. Nothing that I could say or do availed against the aroused craving for the neglected boy. She resisted my oft-repeated suggestions that Jim was gone, and that there was nothing to do but make the best of it. She refused to be resigned, for



she could not bring herself to believe that he was dead. She insisted that he was alive, and that some day he would come back.

This continued through the years, while her hair became whiter and her voice nearly silent, while Jack finished his course and sea term, to be then retired against his will because of the preponderance of officers in a wooden navy too small for them, and while my practice and my health left me under the strain of caring for the queenly woman I loved. Then Jack, a born free-lance who would have entered any navy in the world had a war been on, did the next best thing for him; he secured command of a large, new merchant ship, and made a successful voyage, perhaps the youngest and probably the best educated master in the merchant marine. When he returned my nerves were as bad as his mother's, my practice was gone, my future uncertain; and so we accepted his invitation to make a voyage with him, I with the listlessness of all neurasthenics, my wife with an avidity which surprised us. She brightened at once.

And now this story really begins.

## II

SHE was a two-thousand-ton, double top-gallant and skysail yard ship—one of the larger, slower type that succeeded the old Cape Horn clippers, but a ship that even a naval officer might feel proud to command; and Jack was certainly proud of her. And as we—his mother and myself—watched him pacing the poop-deck as sail was being made, giving an occasional quiet order to the helmsman or sending a brazen roar forward to the mate on the forecabin, we were frankly proud of him. Six feet tall to an inch, straight as a man may be, with a chest almost as deep as his shoulders were broad, sunburned and brown-eyed, with only a well-kept mustache to relieve the boyishness of his face, he presented a picture that brought light into the eyes and a smile to the face of that mother as she stood beside me. But a contrasting look of pain followed, and I knew the thought behind was of the other boy, of whom we never spoke.

The first mate was a huge, hairy, brutal sort of a man, uneducated beyond the mechanical formulas of navigation, but with a large and healthy conception of his own value to the ship and her people. The second mate was like him to a lesser extent

—not quite so big, nor brutal, nor profane, and with less of the art of navigation.

At eight bells of that first evening out the men were chosen into watches by the two mates much as boys choose sides in a ball game, and my wife and I drew amidships to witness the scene. They were an unkempt lot in the moonlight, mostly foreigners, and clad in greasy and tarry garments of nondescript pattern and shape. Each called out his name as he was chosen, moving to starboard or port, according to the watch he now belonged to, and when the job was half done Jack, smoking a cigar, joined us and critically scanned his crew.

"Relieve the wheel and lookout," said the mate, when the last man was chosen. "That'll do the watch."

"Wait!" said Jack sharply, tossing away his cigar and stepping toward the dispersing men. "I've something to say to you."

They halted and drew together.

"This is my second voyage in the merchant marine," he continued. "The last was my first. Before that I was in the navy, with the power of the law and the Charlestown prison behind me in every order I gave to a man. As a consequence of this condition no man-o'-war's man ever refuses to obey an order, and few of them ever get to that prison. But I brought such ideas with me when I took command of this ship. I spoke kindly to my men and treated them well. I forbade my mates to bully or strike them, and even ironed my second mate for ignoring my wishes. I took sick and injured men aft and nursed them. But I found that I had made a mistake. Merchant sailors can be jailed as easily as man-o'-war's men, but they don't know it. Knowing nothing, they fear nothing until it comes to them. Orders were disobeyed on that voyage, and each man was his own boss; ropes were never coiled up without an argument, gear was rove off wrong, ear-rings were passed farm-fashion, canvas was lost, marlinespikes, capstan-bars, and draw-buckets went overboard, tar-pots were dropped from aloft on a clean deck, and a paint-brush came down on my head. Discipline went to the dogs, and I nearly lost my ship. Now there'll be none of that here. As I won't have time nor inclination to appeal to the law if you make trouble I mean to forestall it. I've shipped mates that'll break your heads on the first provocation, and they have my instructions to do it. So



watch out. You'll get plenty of grub while you deserve it, but when you don't it'll be all hands in the afternoon and the government allowance. That'll do."

"That's all right, Cappen," said a big Irishman in a voice of rage. "This is a Yankee ship, an' ye needn't ha' said all that. But I tell ye, if ye'll pick out able seamen yerself in the shippin'-office, 'stid o' lettin' a shippin'-master gi' ye barbers an' waiters that don't know port from sta'board ye'll ha' no trouble wi' yer min. Luk at this ye've gi'n us for a watch-mate." He seized a man standing near, swung him at arm's length, and flung him, spinning on his feet, full against the first mate. That worthy, shocked out of his better judgment, instead of rebuking the Irishman, drew back his mighty fist and struck the staggering man in the face, sending him reeling back toward the place he had come from. He slipped, stumbled, and fell, his head striking the corner of the main-hatch. Then he lay quiet on the deck.

But a strange thing happened—strange and inconsistent with regard to Jack's just-uttered declaration of his position. No sooner had the mate struck the man than Jack, with a muttered curse, launched himself toward his first officer, and knocked him against the fife-rail, where he clung, choking and clucking. Jack had struck him twice, once in the face, once in the body. And now a stranger thing happened. It all occurred so quickly that I could hardly take note, shaky of nerve as I was and hampered by the distressed woman on my arm; but Jack, having struck the mate, and before the still erect victim of the mate and the Irishman had stumbled, had immediately bounded toward the Irishman. But as the luckless fellow's head struck the hatch combing, Jack brought up, and with a low, inarticulate whimper and a face like that of a frightened child looked this way and that, then sped aft toward the poop-steps. We followed, while the second mate dispersed the men, and found Jack in a strange condition of terror, unnatural to him, or to any man of his type. His agitated mother endeavored to soothe him, but between her motherly admonitions to Jack came wifely admonitions to me to attend to the poor man who had been so brutally maltreated.

So I went forward, passing on the way the two mates, the one assisting the other. As I passed, the second mate called out that the

other's jaw-bone and some ribs were broken, and that my services were needed; but, feeling enough of indignation to make the brutal first mate the last on my list of patients, I went on, and found the mistreated sailor in the port forecabin, where he had been carried by his shipmates. He was sitting on a chest, just recovering his senses, and looking about in a dazed manner out of swollen and blackened eyes. As the men parted to make way for me Jack's mighty voice sounded from amidships: "Weather main-brace, here. Where's the watch? Where's the second mate? Attend to your yards, sir." Obviously, Jack was himself again.

"I didn't mean to hit the mate wi' him, sorr," said the big Irishman deferentially, "an' it was a dom shame for the mate to slug him like that, even if he was no sailor. But the skipper's a brick. Begob, he'll 'tind to that bunco mate."

"Are you hurt much?" I asked of the victim. He looked into my face, then, rising, burst forth:

"Doctor, doctor, take me away from here. Take me out of this place. They hit me and curse me because I don't know things. I don't know why I am here—I don't know where I am." The broken voice became a wail. "I'm on the water again, and I'll drown, I know I'll drown. Oh, doctor"—he seized my arm—"I'm Jim; don't you know me, doctor?"

"Jim?" I queried. "Jim who?" and turned him to the light.

"Look, doctor. You did this, they told me, when I was a baby." He pulled up the right sleeve of a ragged, filthy shirt, and showed me a dot of india ink just below the elbow.

"For God's sake, are you Jim, the twin brother of Jack? We all thought you were dead—drowned with your father."

"He was drowned, doctor. I floated on a piece of board and was saved. I went crazy for a while, and then—I never could get along. I couldn't get work, and things got worse and worse, and then I took to the road, and then I came to New York, and—I guess I got drunk, and got here."

"Shanghaied, that's what ye were," grunted the Celt.

I looked closely at Jim's face. Aside from the facial angle and the color of the eyes there was no resemblance to the brother who, at seven years of age, had been



his counterpart. A badly kept beard added to the discrepancy, no doubt, but the whole atmosphere of the man was different. There was a slight reminder of Jack in the lower tones of the voice, but its usual note was a whine, and in his whole bearing was the slinking aspect of a vagrant of the worst kind. Certainly, I could not take this human wreck into the presence of that mother and brother.

"You must stay here for a while, Jim," I said firmly. "You must not come near the other end of the ship unless I give you permission, and I will see that you are protected and cared for. Understand? Stay here with these men, and I will see you every day. What is your name?" I asked the Irishman.

"Limerick, sorr—aboard ship."

"Limerick, you seem to be a man, and a square one. This is an old friend of mine—and of my family—but you can understand that he must stay here. See that he is well treated, and I will make it right with you."

"I will that, sorr," answered Limerick promptly, "though I belong in the other watch an' ought to be on deck now. I don't wonder ye're ashamed o' him, sorr. I'm ashamed meself. Just the same I'll break the sponce o' the first mon that lays hands on him. I'll do that for ye, sorr. I know a gentleman, an' ye're one, or ye wouldn't be here in this fo'c'sle."

I went aft and joined Jack and his mother on the poop, forgetting the mate's need of my services in the mood I was in.

"Dad," said Jack, addressing me by the name he had called me since I had become his step-father, "you're a physician. Tell me what ails me. I'm all right now, but I went for the mate for doing just what I had told him to do, and then went into a blue funk over it—frightened out of my senses. But what at? I'm not afraid of any man aboard."

"How is the poor man that was struck?" asked my wife anxiously.

"He's all right," I answered promptly, understanding now her instinctive concern, and inclined to smile at Jack's palpable resentment of it.

"But what's the matter with *me*?" he demanded sharply.

"I don't know, Jack," I said. "I'll have to think it out."

His mention of the mate had recalled to me the plight he was in, and I went to him,

finding that the second mate's diagnosis was correct. Two ribs and his jaw-bone were smashed as though from the kick of a mule. I bound him in plasters, and stoically endured his mumbled profanity; then, first seeing my wife to her berth in the after cabin, and thoroughly exhausted by the exciting experiences, I took a sleeping-draft to quiet my nerves and went to my own berth in the forward cabin.

But, perhaps because of the intensity of the strain upon my nervous system, perhaps because of my strong interest in the problem, the sleeping-draft merely threw me into a logical, inductive frame of mind that kept me awake all night, thinking it out. And it was daylight before the problem took shape. After years of separation the twins again shared each other's emotions.

### III

WITH the problem still unsolved, however, I went to sleep, and awakened at eight bells of the afternoon watch. Going on deck, I found a gale of wind blowing out of the southeast, the ship hove down under the three lower topsails, spanker, spencer, and foretopmast staysail, and liquid hills of greenish-gray bombarding the weather-bow and occasionally climbing aboard. Jack, clad in yellow oilskins and sou'wester, stood on the poop in a fleeting patch of sunlight, trying to get an afternoon sight with his sextant as the sun peeped from behind the racing storm-clouds. Jim was also on the poop, but on the lee side, scurrying forward along the alley in advance of the irate second mate, who was profanely criticizing Jim's bad taste in coming to relieve the wheel without knowledge of steering or of the compass. Jack, busy with the sextant, did not witness the scene, nor hear the profanity; but I, having a personal and domestic interest in the matter, met the officer, returning after a final kick at Jim, and softly but intensely informed him that such language must cease within hearing of my wife, or I would deal with him as man to man. He apologized, in his way, and I then gave him the reasons I had given Limerick for keeping Jim out of sight, and secured his cooperation. Limerick was at the wheel, scowling in sympathy with me, and he whispered as I passed that it would not have happened had he been forward—that the men of the other watch had driven



Jim aft to relieve the wheel before they had learned his status.

I joined Jack. He seemed himself, showing no sign of the night's agitation; yet he looked a little worried.

"Couldn't get a sight, dad," he said, swinging his sextant at arm's length, and smiling, rather sadly, I thought. "But the Long Island coast is about ten miles under the lee. How'd you like to drown at the end of a cable to-night?"

"Why," I asked, "is there any danger?"

"We're on the wrong tack, I think; but I expected it to veer to the east. It hangs right on from sou'-sou'-east—dead on to the beach, and as it is it don't make much difference which tack we're on if we hit. If it shows the slightest sign of hauling to the west I'll wear ship and try to clear Montauk. If it don't, it's the anchors."

"Why not wear ship now?—whatever that is," I answered.

"Couldn't clear it anyway with the wind this way, and I'd only lose a full mile to leeward. Our drift under this canvas is quartering, and about three miles an hour."

"Is there no other recourse than wearing ship?"

"Clubhauling, if the wind shifts too late to wear. You see, wearing is putting a ship on the other tack by squaring away before the wind and then rounding to. Clubhauling is going about head to wind with the help of the lee anchor. It's about the most difficult operation in seamanship. We did it once in the *Monocacy*, but few merchant skippers learn the trick."

All this was unintelligible to me at the time, and I went down to my wife. I found her as comfortable as a woman may be in her first storm at sea, and then paid a professional visit to the first officer. Then I went forward on the reeling main-deck to see and encourage the unfortunate Jim. On the way I thought seriously of taking Jack into my confidence, but gave it up when I considered that the shock and mental agitation might not be well for him with his ship in danger. Then I thought of the alternative—could I not arouse a little courage in Jim, so that if a critical moment arrived Jack would not be obsessed with his cowardice, as he was the preceding evening. It was worth trying—at least worth thinking of. In any event Jim would be none the worse for a little bracing up.

I found him shivering in his wet garments,

crouching from the blast of cold rain and spindrift under the weather-rail near the fore rigging.

"Doctor," he sobbed, "take me away from these fellers. They hit me and kick me, and I'm afraid. I haven't a friend here but you."

"Jim," I asked kindly, "do you really believe me to be your friend? Have you full confidence that I can help you?"

"Yes, yes, doctor. You were always good to me, in the old days. And you married mother. Where is she, and Jack? Jack never cared for me, but I'd like to see mother 'fore I die."

"You shall see her sometime, Jim, but not yet—not for a long time, perhaps. You are worn out and want sleep. You want dry clothes and a good, long sleep, and you'll feel all right when you wake up. Stay here and when I beckon to you, come."

I had made up my mind. Going aft, I found my wife in the forward companion-way, where she had been watching me. Her first question was of the poor fellow forward, and I said what I could to quiet the instinctive mother-love that she herself could not analyze. I told her that the man needed only a little care, which I was giving him. Then, when I had led her aft to her quarters, I sought the cabin steward, adjured him to silence, and arranged for exclusive possession of the forward cabin stateroom that adjoined my own. Going on deck, I imposed the same condition upon the second mate (who was beginning to respect me), and beckoned to the expectant Jim. He came on the run, and I soon had him in that room, with his wet rags exchanged for a dry suit of my own, and no one the wiser but the second mate and the steward, both of whom considered him a sick man taken aft for treatment. Which was more or less the truth.

Giving Jim a stimulant, I put him into the berth and covered him, for he still shivered from the chill of the storm. Then, holding his hand, I began a gentle, soothing flow of words in which I assured him that I was his friend, that I would so continue, that he was in no danger while I was with him, but that he must go to sleep, and rest, and that when he wakened he would feel braver and stronger, like his brother Jack, whom he surely must remember. In a few moments his eyelids had ceased to flutter, and soon after they closed under the steady,



monotonous lullaby of my voice; but he was not yet asleep, and I continued, enjoining upon the weary, homeless, and desolate waif again and again—speaking more emphatically as his breathing grew heavier—that he must be like Jack, as he was when they were little boys together and shared the same impulses; that he must hark back to that time, and rouse up the strong, brave soul, common to each, which had developed in Jack, but which in him had been suppressed by years of continued defeat. Strongly insisting upon this toward the last, I finally left him, having actually talked him to sleep.

On deck I found Jack really worried. "If it would only shift," he said, "one way or the other. But here it is, hanging on out of the same quarter, and blowing harder. The storm-center is inland, and coming right at us. See the land yonder?"

A dim line of yellowish brown showed faintly through the dense blanket of gray to leeward—the only visible border between sea and sky. Two hours more would bring us perilously close.

Supper was served, and I ate, hurriedly and ravenously, my first meal in twenty-four hours; then I prepared my wife for what might come, saw that she was dressed warmly, and brought her on deck, where Jack, supperless and anxious, paced the deck abaft the house and watched the wind and compass. Forward, all hands, under the second mate, worked at the two chain cables in the lessening light of the evening, hauling them up from the lockers and ranging them ready for use. Occasionally, in the intervals of work, the men would look keenly aft and to leeward at the approaching line of coast. Every face wore a look of anxiety; all knew of the danger.

When the cables were ranged a quiet order from Jack brought a cast of the lead. Twelve fathoms was the finding.

"Lord grant we hit close to a life-saving station," said Jack, looking fondly at his mother. "No boats could live a minute in this sea. We're not far from the storm-center. It's got to shift six points at least to clear us, now. I'll get ready to clubhaul, anyway."

An order to the tired but very efficient second mate resulted in two strong hawsers being brought up from the forepeak, coiled one each side on the poop abaft the house, and the ends led forward outside of all

rigging to the hawse-pipes in the bow, into which they were passed. Then another sounding was taken, showing ten fathoms of water.

"About half an hour more," said Jack to the second mate. "Fake your braces down for going about, and have the carpenter stand by at the windlass with a top-mall and a punch to slip the chain at any shackle." The officer stared in amazement, but went forward to execute the orders. Evidently, he knew as little of their portent as did I.

He reported in time, "All ready for stays, sir," and we waited. There was nothing more to do, it seemed, with the ship blowing almost straight on to a lee shore. Again was the lead cast, and nine fathoms was the result called out.

"All hands on deck, and stand by on the poop," roared Jack through his hands. The men trooped aft and crowded the weather alley.

A tall, unkempt figure with face tied up in cloths lumbered up the poop-steps and approached Jack. "I b'long on deck, Cappen," he mumbled. "Can I be any good?"

"No, sir," answered Jack kindly, but sharply; "you cannot; but stay on deck and be ready for swimming."

The injured mate bowed his head and, first looking at the compass, then painfully aloft at the wind-vane, seated himself on the wheel-box. His chance of swimming was poor; he could hardly stand.

The steward came up, muffled to the chin in a long overcoat, and the sight of him brought to my mind poor Jim, lying asleep in a cabin berth. Down the after companionway I rushed, but was hardly clear of the stairs before I felt the ship heel still farther under a furious blast of wind, then straighten nearly upright; and over and above the sound of rattling canvas came Jack's thundering roar: "Keep full. Hard up your wheel. Stand by for stays. Down off——" Something had interrupted the order. I heard my wife scream, but I hurried into the forward cabin after Jim, just in time to see him leave the stateroom and dart out through the forward door.

I followed him out, but he was not in sight on the main-deck, nor was he among the men floundering down the poop-steps to stations. So I mounted to the poop; and there, prone upon his back in the alley, was



the unconscious form of Jack, with blood upon his face, and his mother bending over him.

"The wind shifted, and the mizzen royal-yard shook out of her," said the second mate from near the wheel, "and something came down and hit him on the head."

Lifting my wife to her feet, I examined him hurriedly, but found no cause for alarm. He was simply stunned by some falling object. "Let him lie where he is, and he'll come to directly," I said, and, leaving him to his mother, I joined the second mate, to ask of Jim.

But a voice from the top of the house interrupted my query—a voice like the blast of a speaking-trumpet, strangely like Jack's. And there was Jim beside the mizzenmast, bareheaded and erect, his stoop-shoulders squared, his eyes staring straight before him into the horizontal rain and drift from the combers. "Ready about," he had said in that borrowed voice. "Hard alee!"

My wife screamed again, stood up, and stared at the figure on the house, and in a bound I had reached her.

"It's your boy Jim," I said in her ear, "but keep quiet. He's asleep." She knew what I meant, and stood still, staring with wide-open, hungry eyes at Jim, with an occasional downward glance at Jack.

"Get down off that house," sang out the second mate angrily.

"Let him alone," I shouted, "and do what he orders. Do you hear? Obey his orders to the letter. They will be correct."

I hardly knew this myself, but the second mate believed me. He motioned to the helmsman, who ground the wheel hard down. Forward, the forecastle men had let go the foretopmast staysail sheet, and this sail flapped furiously as the ship came slowly up to the wind. I hastened to the compass and looked. Though I could not have named the points, I could see that the wind was now blowing from the southwest, and that the ship *had* been heading nearly straight for that line of sand. I went back to my wife, and Jim turned his expressionless face and sleepy eyes toward the second mate, who had nervously followed me.

"Go forward," Jim commanded; "cock-bill and stand by the lee anchor to let go at the word; then stand by with the carpenter to make fast the spring-line to the chain forward of the windlass, and to slip the chain at the first shackle abaft. And send

two men aft to attend this line at the quarter-bitt."

"Aye, aye, sir," answered the astounded officer, hastening to obey.

Limerick was one of the men sent aft to the spring-line, and his amazement exceeded that of the other. "Goin' to clubhaul her," he said to me, "an' he don't know the compass, an' he's only a barber man an' no sailor. It beats my goin' to sea."

With my arm about my wife I watched the somnambulist, ready to speak to him if I thought the occasion warranted it, ready to prevent others from speaking; for the sleepy mind of Jim—or the soul of the unconscious Jack, if you like—might obey an unwise or misleading word, even now.

Slowly and more slowly the great ship came up against the pounding of the southerly seas, wavered, and stopped with the weather leech of the maintopsail just lifting.

"Let go the lee anchor," thundered Jim. The anchor was dropped, and the chain rattled out of the hawse-pipe.

"Maintopsail haul," came the next order from Jim in the same vibrant voice. The lee main- and weather cro' jack-braces were cast off, and the after yards came around with a swing and a crash that threatened to take them out of her; but they held, and the opposite braces were tautened.

"Is Jim a sailor, too?" my wife whispered.

"No," I answered gently. "He is doing Jack's work for him. Thank God for your boy to-night. He is saving our lives."

Slowly the ship's head sagged away from the wind; then it stopped and a tremor went through her. The anchor had bit, but was dragging.

"Pay out on that chain," roared Jim to the forecastle, then to Limerick he said quietly, "Catch a turn with that spring and stand by to slack away."

"Very good, sorr," answered Limerick, as he took a turn with the line around the bitt. "Oh, he's a navy officer all right, sorr," he said joyously, but softly, to me. "I've been there an' I know 'em."

Again the ship's nose drew up into the wind under the strain of the still dragging anchor, and when head to it, with the foretopmast aback and tending to throw her still farther, Jim called out: "Hang on to your chain. Make fast the spring to the chain, and knock out the shackle-pin." Then he waited a moment or two, until the heaving



ship unmistakably pointed to the southward of the wind's eye, and shouted: "All hands on the forebraces. Fore bowline. Let go and haul. Slip the chain." Then quietly to Limerick: "Handsomely on that spring when the strain comes. Don't part it."

"Aye, aye, sir," laughed Limerick. "I've been in the service, sorr."

"Not a word to him," I said, bounding toward Limerick. "Not a word. He knows what he is doing."

The end of the chain had rattled out of the hawse-pipe, and under the tension of the line to the quarter the big ship was paying off to the southward, while the men slowly hauled the foreyard around. When it finally filled and was steadied, and the ship brought up as high as she would lay, the last of the spring-line slipped out of Limerick's hands and went overboard. And now the big first mate, who had quietly watched the whole operation from the wheel-box, approached and studied the compass.

"The wind is hauling all the time," he said through his swollen jaws, "and we'll have a fair wind to the open sea. But who is that man? He kept her off the beach. She'd 'a' hit in a few minutes more."

"He's captain of the ship," I answered.

But Jim was not acting like a captain now. He ran to the monkey-rail at the side of the house, and partly climbed over to descend. Then he went back and resumed his position at the mizzenmast. Then he made another attempt, succeeded, and, gaining the alley, sped forward to the steps and went down them. A groan from Jack, followed by his mother's cry of sympathy, apprised me of the reason. Jack was recovering consciousness, and after assuring myself that he was in his right mind, I left him, still dazed and stupid, in the care of his mother, and leisurely followed Jim, finding him just where I expected to—sound asleep in the stateroom berth. I wakened him, and he sat up, blinking at me.

"Lordy, what a dream, doctor. Mother and Jack—oh, I forget," he said sleepily. "And something hit me on the head—here." He felt of the spot on his head where Jack had been struck.

"Come out on deck, Jim," I said, and he followed me.

"How do you feel now, Jim?"

"Fine, doctor, but where's this boat going, I'd like to know?"

"Feel afraid of the water, now?"

"Not a bit. Why, it can't hurt anyone, can it—unless you fall into it?"

"Afraid of those men forward, Jim?"

"No, I'm not." His face took on a look of defiance. "Why, doctor, I could lick most o' that crowd, couldn't I? I feel different, somehow. But that dream, doctor, about mother and Jack. That dream meant something. Where are they, and how are they?"

"Come below, Jim."

This is not a story of sentiment, so that reunion will not be described. This story is a question, with a large interrogation point. The question is: What is the human soul? Is it an entity, or a possible merging of entities? Is it a collection of memory clusters, any of which may assume an individuality, or is it a series of mental planes or concentric spheres? Jack is Jack and Jim is Jim, and there is a separate ego to each. But what part of Jim's soul left him to obsess Jack during the fracas forward when Jack was awake, and why did it not come again before Jack was struck down, and when he was but normally disturbed over the ship's peril. And how much or how little of Jack went into Jim under my suggestion to the latter to be like him, which waited until Jack was unconscious before acting, and which left him when Jack awoke to claim it?

We are sailing south with a crew and a first mate that think Jim a fugitive from justice, protected by the skipper, and with a second mate who thinks me the devil and Jim my familiar. There is a white-haired, happy woman growing young in her aroused mother-love; and there is a former very promising hobo developing surprising qualities of mind and seamanship under mine and Jack's tutelage. But from none of these can I get any light. I am only a village practitioner, and I submit the question to others: What is the human soul?





HE HAD ENTERED THE ROOM VERY QUIETLY, AND HE MADE NO ELABORATE APOLOGY FOR BEING LATE

(*"The King's Messenger"*)



# The King's Messenger

By F. Marion Crawford

Illustrated by Frank Snapp

IT was a rather dim daylight dinner. I remember that quite distinctly, for I could see the glow of the sunset over the trees in the park, through the high window at the west end of the dining-room. I had expected to find a larger party, I believe, for I recollect being a little surprised at seeing only a dozen people assembled at table. It seemed to me that in old times, ever so long ago, when I had last stayed in that house, there had been as many as thirty or forty guests. I recognized some of them among a number of beautiful portraits that hung on the walls. There was room for a great many because there was only one huge window, at one end, and one large door at the other. I was very much surprised, too, to see a portrait of myself, evidently painted about twenty years ago by Lenbach. It seemed very strange that I should have so completely forgotten the picture, and that I should not be able to remember having sat for it. We were good friends, it is true, and he might have painted it from memory, without my knowledge, but it was certainly strange that he should never have told me about it. The portraits that hung in the dining-room were all very good indeed and all, I should say, by the best painters of that time.

My left-hand neighbor was a lovely young girl whose name I had forgotten, though I had known her long, and I fancied that she looked a little disappointed when she saw that I was beside her. On my right there was a vacant seat, and beyond it sat an elderly woman with features as hard as the overwhelmingly splendid diamonds she wore. Her eyes made me think of gray glass marbles cemented into a stone mask. It was odd that her name should have escaped me, too, for I had often met her.

The table looked irregular, and I counted the guests mechanically while I ate my soup. We were only twelve, but the empty chair beside me was the thirteenth place.

I suppose it was not very tactful of me to mention this, but I wanted to say something to the beautiful girl on my left, and no other subject for a general remark suggested itself. Just as I was going to speak I remembered who she was.

"Miss Lorna," I said, to attract her attention, for she was looking away from me toward the door, "I hope you are not superstitious about there being thirteen at table, are you?"

"We are only twelve," she said, in the sweetest voice in the world.

"Yes; but some one else is coming. There's an empty chair here beside me."

"Oh, he doesn't count," said Miss Lorna quietly. "At least, not for everybody. When did you get here? Just in time for dinner, I suppose."

"Yes," I answered. "I'm in luck to be beside you. It seems an age since we were last here together."

"It does indeed!" Miss Lorna sighed and looked at the pictures on the opposite wall. "I've lived a lifetime since I saw you last."

I smiled at the exaggeration. "When you are thirty, you won't talk of having your life behind you," I said.

"I shall never be thirty," Miss Lorna answered, with such an odd little air of conviction that I did not think of anything to say. "Besides, life isn't made up of years or months or hours, or of anything that has to do with time," she continued. "You ought to know that. Our bodies are something better than mere clocks, wound up to show just how old we are at every moment, by our hair turning gray and our teeth falling out and our faces getting wrinkled and yellow, or puffy and red! Look at your own portrait over there. I don't mind saying that you must have been twenty years younger when that was painted, but I'm sure you are just the same man to-day—improved by age, perhaps."

I heard a sweet little echoing laugh that



seemed very far away; and indeed I could not have sworn that it rippled from Miss Lorna's beautiful lips, for though they were parted and smiling my impression is that they did not move, even as little as most women's lips are moved by laughter.

"Thank you for thinking me improved," I said. "I find you a little changed, too. I was just going to say that you seem sadder, but you laughed just then."

"Did I? I suppose that's the right thing to do when the play is over, isn't it?"

"If it has been an amusing play," I answered, humoring her.

The wonderful violet eyes turned to me, full of light. "It's not been a bad play. I don't complain."

"Why do you speak of it as over?"

"I'll tell you, because I'm sure you will keep my secret. You will, won't you? We were always such good friends, you and I, even two years ago when I was young and silly. Will you promise not to tell anyone till I'm gone?"

"Gone?"

"Yes. Will you promise?"

"Of course I will. But—" I did not finish the sentence, because Miss Lorna bent nearer to me, so as to speak in a much lower tone. While I listened, I felt her sweet young breath on my cheek.

"I'm going away to-night with the man who is to sit at your other side," she said. "He's a little late—he often is, for he is tremendously busy; but he'll come presently, and after dinner we shall just stroll out into the garden and never come back. That's my secret. You won't betray me, will you?"

Again, as she looked at me, I heard that far-off silver laugh, sweet and low. I was almost too much surprised by what she had told me to notice how still her parted lips were, but that comes back to me now, with many other details.

"My dear Miss Lorna," I said, "do think of your parents before taking such a step!"

"I have thought of them," she answered. "Of course they would never consent, and I am very sorry to leave them, but it can't be helped."

At this moment, as often happens when two people are talking in low tones at a large dinner-table, there was a momentary lull in the general conversation, and I was spared the trouble of making any further

answer to what Miss Lorna had told me so unexpectedly, and with such profound confidence in my discretion.

To tell the truth, she would very probably not have listened, whether my words expressed sympathy or protest, for she had turned suddenly pale, and her eyes were wide and dark. The lull in the talk at table was due to the appearance of the man who was to occupy the vacant place beside me.

He had entered the room very quietly, and he made no elaborate apology for being late, as he sat down, bending his head courteously to our hostess and her husband, and smiling in a gentle sort of way as he nodded to the others.

"Please forgive me," he said quietly. "I was detained by a funeral and missed the train."

It was not until he had taken his place that he looked across me at Miss Lorna and exchanged a glance of recognition with her. I noticed that the lady with the hard face and the splendid diamonds, who was at his other side, drew away from him a little, as if not wishing even to let his sleeve brush against her bare arm. It occurred to me at the same time that Miss Lorna must be wishing me anywhere else than between her and the man with whom she was just about to run away, and I wished for their sake and mine that I could change places with him.

He was certainly not like other men, and though few people would have called him handsome there was something about him that instantly fixed the attention; rarely beautiful though Miss Lorna was, almost everyone would have noticed him first on entering the room, and most people, I think, would have been more interested by his face than by hers. I could well imagine that some women might love him, even to distraction, though it was just as easy to understand that others might be strongly repelled by him, and might even fear him.

For my part, I shall not try to describe him as one describes an ordinary man, with a dozen or so adjectives that leave nothing to the imagination but yet offer it no picture that it can grasp. My instinct was to fear him rather than think of him as a possible friend, but I could not help feeling instant admiration for him, as one does at first sight for anything that is very complete, harmonious, and strong. He was dark, and pale with a shadowy pallor I never saw in any other face; the features of thrice-



great Hermes were not modeled in more perfect symmetry; his luminous eyes were not unkind, but there was something fateful in them, and they were set very deep under the grand white brow. His age I could not guess, but I should have called him young; standing, I had seen that he was tall and sinewy, and now that he was seated, he had the unmistakable look of a man accustomed to be in authority, to be heard and to be obeyed. His hands were white, his fingers straight, lean, and very strong.

Everyone at the table seemed to know him, but as often happens among civilized people no one called him by name in speaking to him.

"We were beginning to be afraid that you might not get here," said our host.

"Really?" The Thirteenth Guest smiled quietly, but shook his head. "Did you ever know me to break an engagement, under any circumstances?"

The master of the house laughed, though not very cordially, I thought. "No," he answered. "Your reputation for keeping your appointments is proverbial. Even your enemies must admit that."

The Guest nodded and smiled again. Miss Lorna bent toward me.

"What do you think of him?" she asked, almost in a whisper.

"Very striking sort of man," I answered, in a low tone. "But I'm inclined to be a little afraid of him."

"So was I, at first," she said, and I heard the silver laugh again. "But that soon wears off," she went on. "You'll know him better some day!"

"Shall I?"

"Yes; I'm quite sure you will. Oh, I don't pretend that I fell in love with him at first sight! I went through a phase of feeling afraid of him, as almost everyone does. You see, when people first meet him they cannot possibly know how kind and gentle he can be, though he is so tremendously strong. I've heard him called cruel and ruthless and cold, but it's not true. Indeed it's not! He can be as gentle as a woman, and he's the truest friend in all the world."

I was going to ask her to tell me his name, but just then I saw that she was looking at him, across me, and I sat as far back in my chair as I could, so that they might speak to each other if they wished to. Their eyes

met, and there was a longing light in both—I could not help glancing from one to the other—and Miss Lorna's sweet lips moved almost imperceptibly, though no sound came from them. I have seen young lovers make that small sign to each other even across a room, the signal of a kiss given and returned in the heart's thoughts.

If she had been less beautiful and young, if the man she loved had not been so magnificently manly, it would have irritated me; but it seemed natural that they should love and not be ashamed of it, and I only hoped that no one else at the table had noticed the tenderly quivering little contraction of the young girl's exquisite mouth.

"You remembered," said the man quietly. "I got your message this morning. Thank you."

"I hope it's not going to be very hard," murmured Miss Lorna, smiling. "Not that it would make any great difference if it were," she added more thoughtfully.

"It's the easiest thing in life," he said, "and I promise that you shall never regret it."

"I trust you," the young girl answered simply.

Then she turned away, for she no doubt felt the awkwardness of talking to him across me of a secret which she had confided to me without letting him know that she had done so. Instinctively I turned to him, feeling that the moment had come for disregarding formality and making his acquaintance, since we were neighbors at table in a friend's house and I had known Miss Lorna so long. Besides, it is always interesting to talk with a man who is just going to do something very dangerous or dramatic and who does not guess that you know what he is about.

"I suppose you motored here from town, as you said you missed the train," I said. "It's a good road, isn't it?"

"Yes, I literally flew," replied the dark man, with his gentle smile. "I hope you're not superstitious about thirteen at table?"

"Not in the least," I answered. "In the first place, I'm a fatalist about everything that doesn't depend on my own free will. As I have not the slightest intention of doing anything to shorten my life, it will certainly not come to an abrupt end by any auto-suggestion arising from a silly superstition like that about thirteen."



"Autosuggestion? That's rather a new light on the old belief."

"And secondly," I continued, "I don't believe in death. There is no such thing."

"Really?" My neighbor seemed greatly surprised. "How do you mean?" he asked. "I don't think I understand you."

"I'm sure I don't," put in Miss Lorna, and the silver laugh followed. She had overheard the conversation, and some of the others were listening, too.

"You don't kill a book by translating it," I said, rather glad to expound my views. "Death is only a translation of life into another language. That's what I mean."

"That's a most interesting point of view," observed the Thirteenth Guest thoughtfully. "I never thought of the matter in that way before, though I've often seen the expression 'translated' in epitaphs. Are you sure that you are not indulging in a little paronomasia?"

"What's that?" inquired the hard-faced lady, with all the contempt which a scholarly word deserves in polite society.

"It means punning," I answered. "No, I am not making a pun. Grave subjects do not lend themselves to low forms of humor. I assure you, I am quite in earnest. Death, in the ordinary sense, is not a real phenomenon at all, so long as there is any life in the universe. It's a name we apply to a change we only partly understand."

"Learned discussions are an awful bore," said the hard-faced lady very audibly.

"I don't advise you to argue the question too sharply with your neighbor there," laughed the master of the house, leaning forward and speaking to me. "He'll get the better of you! He's an expert at what you call 'translating people into another language.'"

If the man beside me was a famous surgeon, as our host perhaps meant, it seemed to me that the remark was not in very good taste. He looked more like a soldier.

"Does our friend mean that you are in the army, and that you are a dangerous person?" I asked of him.

"No," he answered quietly. "I'm only a King's Messenger, and in my own opinion I'm not at all dangerous."

"It must be rather an active life," I said, in order to say something; "constantly coming and going, I suppose?"

"Yes, constantly."

I felt that Miss Lorna was watching and

listening, and I turned to her, only to find that she was again looking beyond me, at my neighbor, though he did not see her. I remember her face very distinctly as it was just then; the recollection is, in fact, the last impression I retain of her matchless beauty, for I never saw her after that evening.

It is something to have seen one of the most beautiful women in the world gazing at the man who was more to her than life and all it held; it is something I cannot forget. But he did not return her look just then, for he had joined in the general conversation, and very soon afterward he practically absorbed it.

He talked well; more than well, marvelously; for before long even the lady with the hard face was listening spellbound, with the rest of us, to his stories of nations and tales of men, brilliant descriptions, anecdotes of heroism and tenderness that were each a perfect coin from the mint of humanity, with dashes of daring wit, glimpses of a profound insight into the great mystery of the beyond, and now and then a manly comment on life that came straight from the heart: never, in all my long experience, have I heard poet, or scholar, or soldier, or ruler of men talk as he did that evening. And as I listened I was more and more amazed that such a man should be but a simple King's Messenger, as he said he was, earning a poor gentleman's living by carrying his majesty's despatches from London to the ends of the earth, and I made some sad and sober inward reflections on the vast difference between the gift of talking supremely well and the genius a man must have to accomplish even one little thing that may endure in history, in literature, or in art.

"Do you wonder that I love him?" whispered Miss Lorna.

Even in the whisper I heard the glorious pride of the woman who loves altogether and wholly believes that there is no one like her chosen man.

"No," I answered, "for it is no wonder. I only hope——" I stopped, feeling that it would be foolish and unkind to express the doubt I felt.

"You hope that I may not be disappointed," said Miss Lorna, still almost in a whisper. "That was what you were going to say, I'm sure."

I nodded, in spite of myself, and met



her eyes; they were full of a wonderful light.

"No one was ever disappointed in him," she murmured—"no living being, neither man, nor woman, nor child. With him I shall have peace and love without end."

"Without end?"

"Yes. Forever and ever!"

After dinner we scattered through the great rooms in the soft evening light of mid-June, and by and by I was standing at an open window, with the mistress of the house, looking out across the garden.

In the distance, Lorna was walking slowly away down the broad avenue with a tall man; and while they were still in sight, though far away, I am sure that I saw his arm steal round her as if he were drawing her on, and her head bent lovingly to his shoulder; and so they glided away into the twilight and disappeared.

Then at last I turned to my hostess. "Do you mind telling me the name of that man who came in late and talked so well?" I asked. "You all seemed to know him like an old friend."

She looked at me in profound surprise. "Do you mean to say that you do not know who he is?" she asked.

"No. I never met him before. He is a most extraordinary man to be only a King's Messenger."

"He is indeed the King's Messenger, my dear friend. His name is Death."

I dreamed this dream one afternoon last summer, dozing in my chair on deck, under the double awning, when the *Alda* was anchored off Goletta, in sight of Carthage, and the cool north breeze was blowing down the deep gulf of Tunis. I must have been awakened by some slight sound from a boat alongside, for when I opened my eyes my man was standing a little way off, evidently waiting till I should finish my nap. He brought me a telegram which had just come on board, and I opened it rather drowsily, not expecting any particular news.

It was from England, from a very dear friend.

Lorna died suddenly last night at Church Hadley.

That was all; the dream had been a message.

"With him I shall have peace and love without end."

Thank God, I hear those words in her own voice, whenever I think of her.



## Night

By Lucia Chamberlain

NIGHT lies over my roof till the timbers crack.

His purple eye presses my window-pane,

His finger thrusts in the keyhole chink,

His long hair blows to the candle blink.

Not a niche of the world but is fulfilled of black.

I have kindled a spark in his face—he shall quench it again.

Take thy hand from my heart, take thy shadow from my back.

O night, take thy foot from my door!

Lo, man and the fire man hath kindled for light,

Shall neither avail over thee in thy might?

Dost thou ride my roof-beam evermore?

. . . . .

Across the hills how red upheaps the sun!

In the face of his glory black the shadows of men's bodies run.

Lo, night, I know thee now for all thou art—

The shadow of man's heart.





"THE POOR PASSING SOUL HAD EXERTED ITS FAILING WILL TO RESTORE  
A BROKEN CONNECTION"

*("Beyond the Wall")*





## BEYOND THE WALL

BY AMBROSE BIERCE

Illustrated by N.H. MAC GILVARY

**M**ANY years ago, on my way from Hongkong to New York, I passed a week in San Francisco. A long time had gone by since I had been in that city, during which my ventures in the Orient had prospered beyond my hope; I was rich and could afford

to revisit my own country to renew my friendship with such of the companions of my youth as still lived and remembered me with the old affection. Chief of these, I hoped, was Mohun Dampier, an old schoolmate with whom I had held a desultory correspondence which had long ceased, as is the way of correspondence between men. You may have observed that the indisposition to write a merely social letter is in the ratio of the square of the distance between you and your correspondent. It is a law.

I remembered Dampier as a handsome, strong young fellow of scholarly tastes, with an aversion to work and a marked indifference to many of the things that the world cares for, including wealth, of which, however, he had inherited enough to put him beyond the reach of want. In his family, one of the oldest and most aristocratic in the country; it was, I think, a matter of pride that no member of it had ever been in trade or politics, or suffered any kind of distinction. Mohun was a trifle sentimental, and had in him a singular vein of superstition, which led him to the study of all manner of occult subjects, although his sane mental health safeguarded him against fantastic and perilous faiths. He made daring incursions into the realm of the unreal without renouncing

his residence in the partly surveyed and charted region of what we are pleased to call certitude.

The night of my visit to him was stormy. The Californian winter was on, and the incessant rain plashed in the deserted streets, or, lifted by irregular gusts of wind, was hurled against the houses with incredible fury. With no small difficulty my cabman found the right place, away out toward the ocean beach, in a sparsely populated suburb. The dwelling, a rather ugly one, apparently, stood in the center of its grounds, which, as nearly as I could make out in the gloom, were destitute of either flowers or grass. Three or four trees, writhing and moaning in the torment of the tempest, appeared to be trying to escape from their dismal environment and take the chance of finding a better one out at sea. The house was a two-story brick structure with a tower, a story higher, at one corner. In a window of that was the only visible light. Something in the appearance of the place made me shudder, a performance that may have been assisted by a rill of rain-water down my back as I scuttled to cover in the doorway.

In answer to my note apprising him of my wish to call, Dampier had written, "Don't ring—open the door and come up." I did so. The staircase was dimly lighted by a single gas-jet at the top of the second flight. I managed to reach the landing without disaster and entered by an open door into the lighted square room of the tower. Dampier came forward in gown and slipper to receive me, giving me the greeting that I wished, and if I had held a thought that it might more fitly have been accorded me at the front door the first look at him dispelled it.



He was not the same. Hardly past middle age, he had gone gray and had acquired a pronounced stoop. His figure was thin and angular, his face deeply lined, his complexion dead-white, without a touch of color. His eyes, unnaturally large, glowed with a fire that was almost uncanny.

He seated me, proffered a cigar, and with grave and obvious sincerity assured me of the pleasure that it gave him to meet me. Some unimportant conversation followed, but all the while I was dominated by a melancholy sense of the great change in him. This he must have perceived, for he suddenly said with a bright enough smile, "You are disappointed in me—*non sum qualis eram*."

I hardly knew what to reply, but managed to say, "Why, really, I don't know: your Latin is about the same."

He brightened again. "No," he said, "being a dead language, it grows in appropriateness. But please have the patience to wait: where I am going there is perhaps a better tongue. Will you care to have a message in it?"

The smile faded as he spoke, and as he concluded he was looking into my eyes with a gravity that distressed me. Yet I would not surrender myself to his mood, nor permit him to see how deeply his prescience of death affected me.

"I fancy that it will be long," I said, "before human speech will cease to serve our need; and then the need, with its possibilities of service, will have passed."

He made no reply, and I too was silent, for the talk had taken a dispiriting turn, yet I knew not how to give it a more agreeable character. Suddenly, in a pause of the storm, when the dead silence was almost startling by contrast with the previous uproar, I heard a gentle tapping, which appeared to come from the wall behind my chair. The sound was such as might have been made by a human hand, not as upon a door by one asking admittance, but rather, I thought, as an agreed signal, an assurance of some one's presence in an adjoining room; most of us, I fancy, have had more experience of such communications than we would care to relate. I glanced at Dampier. If possibly there was something of amusement in the look he did not observe it. He appeared to have forgotten my presence, and was staring at the wall behind me with an expression in his eyes that I am unable to

name, although my memory of it is as vivid to-day as was my sense of it then. The situation was embarrassing; I rose to take my leave. At this he seemed suddenly to recover himself.

"Please be seated," he said; "it is nothing—no one is there."

But the tapping was repeated, and with the same gentle, slow insistence as before.

"Pardon me," I said, "it is late. May I call to-morrow?"

He smiled—a little mechanically, I thought. "It is very delicate of you," said he, "but quite needless. Really, this is the only room in the tower, and no one is there. At least——" He left the sentence incomplete, rose, and threw up a window, the only opening in the wall from which the sound seemed to come. "See."

Not clearly knowing what else to do, I followed him to the window and looked out. A street-lamp some little distance away gave enough light through the murk of the rain that was again falling in torrents to make it entirely plain that "no one was there." In truth there was nothing but the sheer blank wall of the tower.

Dampier closed the window and signing me to my seat resumed his own.

The incident was not in itself particularly mysterious; any one of a dozen explanations was possible (though none occurred to me), yet it impressed me strangely, the more, perhaps, from my friend's effort to reassure me, which seemed to dignify it with a certain significance and importance. He had proved that no one was there, but in that fact lay all the interest; and he proffered no explanation. His silence was irritating and made me resentful.

"My good friend," I said, somewhat ironically, I fear, "I am not disposed to question your right to harbor as many spooks as you find agreeable to your taste and consistent with your notions of companionship; that is no business of mine. But being just a plain man of affairs, mostly of this world, I find spooks needless to my peace and comfort. I am going to my hotel, where my fellow-guests are still in the flesh."

It was not a very civil speech, but he manifested no feeling about it. "Kindly remain," he said. "I am grateful for your presence here. What you have heard to-night I have believed myself to have heard twice before. Now I know it was no illu-



sion. That is much to me—more than you know. Have a fresh cigar and a good stock of patience while I tell you the story.”

The rain was now falling more steadily, with a low, monotonous susurrant, interrupted at long intervals by the sudden slashing of the boughs of the trees as the wind rose and failed. The night was well advanced, but both sympathy and curiosity held me a willing listener to my friend's monologue, which I did not interrupt by a single word from beginning to end.

“Ten years ago,” he said, “I occupied a ground-floor apartment in one of a row of houses, all alike, away at the other end of the town, on what we call Rincon Hill. This had been the best quarter of San Francisco, but had fallen into neglect and decay, partly because the primitive character of its domestic architecture no longer suited the maturing tastes of our wealthy citizens, partly because certain public improvements had made a wreck of it. The row of dwellings in one of which I lived stood a little way back from the street, each having a miniature garden, separated from its neighbors by low iron fences and bisected with mathematical precision by a gravel walk from gate to door.

“One morning as I was leaving my lodging I observed a young girl entering the adjoining garden on the left. It was a warm day in June, and she was lightly gowned in white. From her shoulders hung a broad straw hat profusely decorated with flowers and wonderfully beribboned in the fashion of the time. My attention was not long held by the exquisite simplicity of her costume, for no one could look at her face and think of anything earthly. Do not fear; I shall not profane it by description; it was beautiful exceedingly. All that I had ever seen or dreamed of loveliness was in that matchless living picture by the hand of the Divine Artist. So deeply did it move me that, without a thought of the impropriety of the act, I unconsciously bared my head, as a devout Catholic or well-bred Protestant uncovers before an image of the Blessed Virgin. The maiden showed no displeasure; she merely turned her glorious dark eyes upon me with a look that made me catch my breath, and without other recognition of my act passed into the house. For a moment I stood motionless, hat in hand, painfully conscious of my rudeness, yet so dominated by the emotion inspired by that

vision of incomparable beauty that my penitence was less poignant than it should have been. Then I went my way, leaving my heart behind. In the natural course of things I should probably have remained away until nightfall, but by the middle of the afternoon I was back in the little garden, affecting an interest in the few foolish flowers that I had never before observed. My hope was vain: she did not appear.

“To a night of unrest succeeded a day of expectation and disappointment, but on the day after, as I wandered aimlessly about the neighborhood, I met her. Of course I did not repeat my folly of uncovering, nor venture by even so much as too long a look to manifest an interest in her; yet my heart was beating audibly. I trembled and consciously colored as she turned her big black eyes upon me with a look of obvious recognition entirely devoid of boldness or coquetry.

“I will not weary you with particulars; many times afterward I met the maiden, yet never either addressed her or sought to fix her attention. Nor did I take any action toward making her acquaintance. Perhaps my forbearance, requiring so supreme an effort of self-denial, will not be entirely clear to you. That I was heels over head in love is true, but who can overcome his habit of thought, or reconstruct his character? I was what some foolish persons are pleased to call, and others, more foolish, are pleased to be called—an aristocrat; and despite her beauty, her charms and graces, the girl was not of my class. I had learned her name—which it is needless to speak—and something of her family. She was an orphan, a dependent niece of the impossible, elderly fat woman in whose lodging-house she lived. My income was small, and I lacked the talent for marrying; it is perhaps a gift. An alliance with that family would condemn me to their manner of life, part me from my books and studies, and, in a social sense, reduce me to the ranks. It is easy to deprecate such considerations as these, and I have not retained myself for the defense. Let judgment be entered against me, but, in strict justice, all my ancestors for generations should be made co-defendants, and I be permitted to plead in mitigation of punishment the imperious mandate of heredity. To a mésalliance of that kind every globule of my ancestral blood spoke in opposition. In brief, my tastes, habits, instinct, with



whatever of reason my love had left me—all fought against it. Moreover, I was an irreclaimable sentimentalist, and found a subtle charm in an impersonal and spiritual relation, which acquaintance might vulgarize and marriage would certainly dispel. No woman, I argued, is what this lovely creature seems. Love is a delicious dream; why should I bring about my own awakening?

"The course dictated by all this sense and sentiment was obvious. Honor, pride, prudence, preservation of my ideals—all commanded me to go away, but for that I was too weak. The utmost that I could do by a mighty effort of will was to cease meeting the girl, and that I did. I even avoided the chance encounters of the garden, leaving my lodging only when I knew that she had gone to her music lessons, and returning after nightfall. Yet all the while I was as one in a trance, indulging the most fascinating fancies and ordering my entire intellectual life in accordance with my dream. Ah, my friend, as one whose actions have a traceable relation to reason and considerations of worldly expediency, you cannot know the fool's paradise in which I lived.

"One evening the devil put it into my head to be an unspeakable idiot. By apparently careless and purposeless questioning I learned from my gossiping landlady that the young woman's bedroom adjoined my own, a party wall between. Yielding to a sudden and coarse impulse, I gently rapped on the wall. There was no response, naturally, but I was in no mood to accept rebuke. A madness was upon me, and I repeated the folly, the offense, but again ineffectually, and I had the decency to desist.

"An hour later, while absorbed in some of my infernal studies, I heard, or thought I heard, my signal answered. Flinging down my books, I sprang to the wall and as steadily as my beating heart would permit gave three slow taps upon it. This time the response was distinct, unmistakable: one, two, three—an exact repetition of my signal. That was all I could elicit, but it was enough—too much.

"The next evening, and for many evenings afterward, that folly went on, I always having 'the last word.' During the whole period I was deliriously happy, but with the perversity of my nature I persevered in my resolution not to see her. Then, as I should have expected, I got no further an-

swers. 'She is disgusted,' I said to myself, 'with what she thinks my timidity in making no more definite advances'; and I resolved to seek her and make her acquaintance and—what? I did not know, nor do I now know, what might have come of it. I only know that I passed days and days trying to meet her, and all in vain; she was invisible as well as inaudible. I haunted the streets where we had met, but she did not come. From my window I watched the garden in front of her house, but she passed neither in nor out. I fell into the deepest dejection, believing that she had gone away, yet I took no steps to resolve my doubt by inquiry of my landlady, to whom, indeed, I had taken an unconquerable aversion from her having once spoken of the girl with less of reverence than I thought befitting.

"There came a fateful night. Worn out with emotion, irresolution, and despondency I had retired early and fallen into such sleep as was still possible to me. In the middle of the night something—some malign power bent upon the wrecking of my peace forever—caused me to open my eyes and sit up, wide awake and listening intently for I knew not what. Then I thought I heard a faint tapping on the wall—the mere ghost of the familiar signal. In a few moments it was repeated: one, two, three—no louder than before, but addressing a sense alert and strained to receive it. I was about to reply when the Adversary of Peace again intervened in my affairs with a rascally suggestion of retaliation. She had long and cruelly ignored me; now I should ignore her. Incredible fatuity—may God forgive it! All the rest of the night I lay awake, fortifying my obstinacy with shameless justifications and—listening.

"Late the next morning, as I was leaving the house, I met my landlady, entering.

"'Good morning, Mr. Dampier,' she said. 'Have you heard the news?'

"I replied in words that I had heard no news, in manner that I did not care to hear any. The manner escaped her observation.

"'About the sick young lady next door,' she babbled on. 'What! you did not know? Why, she has been ill for weeks. And now—'

"I almost sprang upon her. 'And now,' I cried, 'now what?'

"'She is dead.'

"That is not the whole story. In the middle of the night the patient, awakening



from a long stupor after a week of delirium, had asked—it was her last utterance—that her bed be moved to the opposite side of the room. Those in attendance had thought the request a vagary of her delirium, but had complied. And there the poor passing soul had exerted its failing will to restore a broken connection—a golden thread of sentiment between its innocence and a monstrous baseness owning a blind, brutal allegiance to the Law of Self.

“What reparation could I make? Are there masses that can be said for the repose of souls that are abroad such nights as this—spirits ‘blown about by the viewless winds’—coming in the storm and darkness with signs and portents, hints of memory and presages of doom?”

“This is the third visitation. On the first occasion I was too skeptical to do more than verify by natural methods the character of the incident; on the second, I responded to the signal after it had been several times repeated, but without result. To-night’s recurrence completes the ‘fatal triad’ expounded by Parapelius Necromantius. There is no more to tell.”

When Dampier had finished his story I could think of nothing relevant that I cared to say, and to question him would have been a hideous impertinence. I rose and bade him good night in a way to convey to him a sense of my sympathy, which he silently acknowledged by a pressure of the hand. That night, alone with his sorrow and remorse, he passed into the Unknown.



## Yule Song

By Clinton Scollard

AN opal sheen is on the snow;  
*(A ho! and a heigh-ho!)*  
 Then who would not a-footing go  
     To pluck the sprays of holly?  
 Then who would not a-roving go  
 To pluck the bonny mistletoe?  
*(A ho! and a heigh-ho!*  
*And out on melancholy!)*

Beneath the sun, beneath the moon,  
*(O piper, play a merry tune!)*  
 Will lad and lass, with nimble shoon,  
     Seek out the sprays of holly,  
 Seek out the mistletoe, a boon  
 That's sweeter than the rose in June.  
*(O piper, play this merry tune—*  
*Away with melancholy!)*







'THERE ARE CERTAIN FEATURES IN WHICH THEY ARE LIKELY TO RESEMBLE US. AND AS LIKELY AS NOT THEY WILL BE COVERED WITH FEATHERS OR FUR. IT IS NO LESS REASONABLE TO SUPPOSE, INSTEAD OF A HAND, A GROUP OF TENTACLES OR PROBOSCIS-LIKE ORGANS'

(*"The Things that Live on Mars"*)

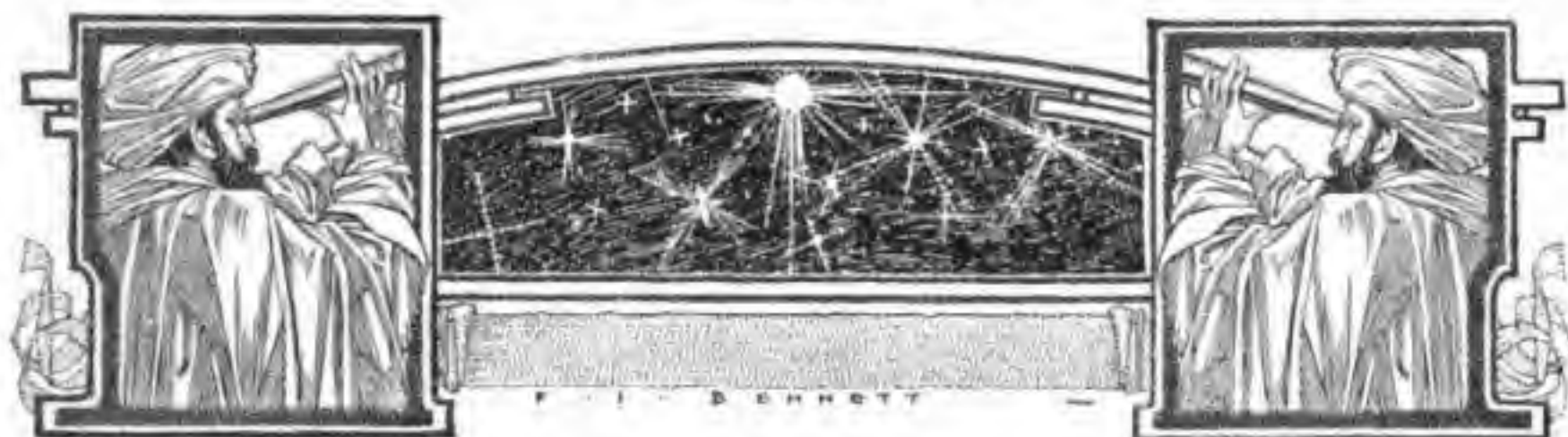


# COSMOPOLITAN MAGAZINE

Vol. XLIV

MARCH, 1908

No. 4



## The Things that Live on Mars

A DESCRIPTION, BASED UPON SCIENTIFIC REASONING, OF THE FLORA AND FAUNA OF OUR NEIGHBORING PLANET, IN CONFORMITY WITH THE VERY LATEST ASTRONOMICAL REVELATIONS

By H. G. Wells

Illustrated by William R. Leigh



WHAT sort of inhabitants may Mars possess?

To this question I gave a certain amount of attention some years ago when I was preparing a story called "The War of the Worlds," in which the Martians are supposed to attack the earth; but since that time much valuable work has been done upon that planet, and one comes to this question again with an ampler equipment of information, and prepared to consider it from new points of view.

Particularly notable and suggestive in the new literature of the subject is the work of my friend, Mr. Percival Lowell, of the Lowell Observatory, Flagstaff, Arizona, to whose publications, and especially his "Mars and its Canals," I am greatly indebted. This book contains a full statement of the case, and a very convincing case it is, not only for the belief that Mars is

habitable, but that it is inhabited by creatures of sufficient energy and engineering science to make canals beside which our greatest human achievements pale into insignificance. He does not, however, enter into any speculation as to the form or appearance of these creatures, whether they are human, quasi-human, supermen, or creatures of a shape and likeness quite different from our own. Necessarily such an inquiry must be at present a speculation of the boldest description, a high imaginative flight. But at the same time it is by no means an unconditioned one. We are bound by certain facts and certain considerations. We are already forbidden by definite knowledge to adopt any foolish fantastic hobgoblin or any artistic ideal that comes into our heads and call it a Martian. Certain facts about Mars we definitely know, and we are not entitled to imagine any Martians that are not in accordance with these facts.

When one speaks of Martians one is apt



to think only of those canal-builders, those beings who, if we are to accept Mr. Lowell's remarkably well-sustained conclusions, now irrigate with melting polar snows and cultivate what were once the ocean-beds of their drying planet. But after all they cannot live there alone; they can be but a part of the natural history of Mars in just the same way that man is but a part of the natural history of the earth. They must have been evolved from other related types, and so we must necessarily give our attention to the general flora and fauna of this world we are invading in imagination before we can hope to deal at all reasonably with the ruling species.

#### DOES LIFE EXIST ON MARS?

And, firstly, will there be a flora and fauna at all? Is it valid to suppose that upon Mars we should find the same distinction between vegetable and animal that we have upon the earth? For the affirmative answer to that an excellent case can be made. The basis upon which all life rests on this planet is the green plant. The green plant alone is able to convert really dead inorganic matter into living substance, and this it does, as everybody knows nowadays, by the peculiar virtue of its green coloring matter, chlorophyl, in the presence of sunshine. All other animated things live directly or indirectly upon the substance of green-leaved plants. Either they eat vegetable food directly, or they eat it indirectly by eating other creatures which live on vegetable food. Now upon this earth it is manifest that nature has tried innumerable experiments and made countless beginnings. Yet she has never produced any other means than chlorophyl whereby inorganic matter, that is to say, soil and minerals and ingredients out of the air, can be built up into living matter. It is plausible, therefore, to suppose that on Mars also, if there is life, chlorophyl will lie at the base of the edifice; in other words, that there will be a vegetable kingdom. And our supposition is greatly strengthened by the fact upon which Mr. Lowell lays stress, that, as the season which corresponds to our spring arrives, those great areas of the Martian surface that were once ocean-beds are suffused with a distinct bluish green hue. It is not the yellow-green of a leafing poplar or oak-tree; it is the bluish green of a springtime pine.

This all seems to justify us in assuming a flora at least upon Mars, a green vegetable kingdom after the fashion of our earthly one. Let us ask now how far we may assume likeness. Is an artist justified in drawing grass and wheat, oaks and elms and roses in a Martian landscape? Is it probable that evolution has gone upon exactly parallel lines on the two planets? Well, here again we have definite facts upon which to base our answer. We know enough to say that the vegetable forms with which we are familiar upon the earth would not "do," as people say, on Mars, and we can even indicate in general terms in what manner they would differ. They would not do because, firstly, the weight of things at the surface of Mars is not half what it would be upon the earth, and, secondly, the general atmospheric conditions are very different. Whatever else they may be the Martian herbs and trees must be adapted to these conditions.

#### PROBABLE APPEARANCE OF THE MARTIAN FLORA

Let us inquire how the first of these two considerations will make them differ. The force of gravity upon the surface of their planet is just three-eighths of its force upon this earth; a pound of anything here would weigh six ounces upon Mars. Therefore the stem or stalk that carries the leaves and flowers of a terrestrial plant would be needlessly and wastefully stout and strong upon Mars; the Martian stems and stalks will all be slenderer and finer and the texture of the plant itself laxer. The limit of height and size in terrestrial plants is probably determined largely by the work needed to raise nourishment from the roots to their topmost points. That work would be so much less upon Mars that it seems reasonable to expect bigger plants there than any that grow upon the earth.

Larger, slighter, slenderer; is that all we can say? No, for we have still to consider the difference in the atmosphere. This is thinner upon Mars than it is upon the earth, and it has less moisture, for we hardly ever see thick clouds there, and rain must be infrequent. Snow occurs nearly everywhere all the year round, but the commonest of all forms of precipitation upon Mars would seem to be dew and hoar frost. Now the shapes of leaves with which we are most familiar are largely determined by rainfall,





A JUNGLE OF BIG, SLENDER, STALKY, LAX-TEXTURED, FLOOD-FED PLANTS WITH A  
SORT OF INSECT LIFE FLUTTERING AMIDST THE VEGETATION



by the need of supporting the hammering of raindrops and of guiding the resulting moisture downward and outward to the rootlets below. To these chief necessities we owe the handlike arrangement of the maple- and chestnut-leaf and the beautiful tracery of fibers that forms their skeletons. These leaves are admirable in rain but ineffectual against snow and frost; snow crushes them down, frost destroys them, and with the approach of winter they are shed. But the Martian tree-leaf will be more after the fashion of a snowfall-meeting leaf, spiky perhaps like the pine-tree needle. Only, unlike the pine-tree needle, it has to meet not a snowy winter but a dry, frost-bitten, sunless winter, and then probably it will shrivel and fall. And since the great danger for a plant in a dry air is desiccation, we may expect these Martian leaves to have thick cuticles, just as the cactus has. Moreover, since moisture will come to the Martian plant mainly from below in seasonal floods from the melting of the snow-caps, and not as rain from above, the typical Martian plant will probably be tall and have its bunches and clusters of spiky bluish green leaves upon uplifting reedy stalks.

Of course there will be an infinite variety of species of plants upon Mars as upon the earth, but these will be the general characteristics of the vegetation.

#### THE ANIMAL KINGDOM

Now this conception of the Martian vegetation as mainly a jungle of big, slender, stalky, lax-textured, flood-fed plants with a great shock of fleshy, rather formless leaves above, and no doubt with as various a display of flowers and fruits as our earthly flora, prepares the ground for the consideration of the Martian animals. It is a matter of common knowledge nowadays how closely related is the structure of every animal to the food it consumes. Different food, different animals, has almost axiomatic value, and the very peculiar nature of the Martian flora is in itself sufficient to dispel the idea of our meeting beasts with any close analogy to terrestrial species. We shall find no flies nor sparrows nor dogs nor cats on Mars. But we shall probably find a sort of insect life fluttering high amidst the vegetation, and breeding during the summer heats in the flood-water below. In the winter it will encyst and hibernate. Its dimensions may be a little bigger than those

ruling among the terrestrial insecta; but the mode of breathing by tracheal tubes, which distinguishes insects, very evidently (and very luckily for us) sets definite limits to insect size. Perhaps these limits are the same upon Mars. We cannot tell. Perhaps they are even smaller; the thinner air may preclude even the developments we find upon the earth in that particular line. Still there is plenty of justification if an artist were to draw a sort of butterfly or moth fluttering about, or antlike creatures scampering up and down the stems of a Martian jungle. Many of them perhaps will have sharp hard proboscides to pierce the tough cuticle of the plants.

#### NO FISH ON THE PLANET

But, and here is a curious difference, there are perhaps no fish or fishlike creatures on Mars at all. In the long Martian winter all the water seems either to drift to the poles and freeze there as snow or to freeze as ice along the water-courses; there are only flood-lakes and water-canals in spring and summer. And forms of life that trusted to gills or any method of under-water breathing must have been exterminated upon Mars ages ago. On earth the most successful air-breathing device is the lung. Lungs carry it universally. Only types of creatures that are fitted with lungs manage to grow to any considerable size out of water in our world. Even the lobsters and scorpions and spiders and such like large crustacean and insect-like forms that come up into the air can do so only by sinking their gills into deep pits to protect them from evaporation and so producing a sort of inferior imitation of a lung. Then and then only can they breathe without their breathing-organs drying up. The Martian air is thinner and drier than ours, and we conclude therefore that there is still more need than on earth for well-protected and capacious lungs. It follows that the Martian fauna will run to large chests. And the lowest types of large beast there will be amphibious creatures which will swim about and breed in the summer waters and bury themselves in mud at the approach of winter. Even these may have been competed out of existence by air-inhaling swimmers. That is the fate our terrestrial amphibia seem to be undergoing at the present time.

Here then is one indication for a picture of a Martian animal: it must be built with





THE SAME REASON THAT WILL MAKE THE VEGETATION LAXER AND FLIMSIER WILL MAKE THE FORMS OF THE MARTIAN ANIMAL KINGDOM LAXER AND FLIMSIER AND EITHER LARGER OR ELSE SLENDERER THAN EARTHLY TYPES



more lung space than the corresponding terrestrial form. And the same reason that will make the vegetation laxer and flimsier will make the forms of the Martian animal kingdom laxer and flimsier and either larger or else slenderer than earthly types.

Much that we have already determined comes in here again to help us to further generalizations. Since the Martian vegetation will probably run big and tall, there will be among these big-chested creatures climbing forms and leaping and flying forms, all engaged in seeking food among its crests and branches. And a thing cannot leap or fly without a well-placed head and good eyes. So an imaginative artist may put in head and eyes, and the mechanical advantages of a fore-and-aft arrangement of the body are so great that it is difficult to suppose them without some sort of backbone. Since the Martian vegetation has become adapted to seasonal flood conditions there will be not only fliers and climbers but waders—long-legged forms. Well, here we get something—fliers, climbers, and waders, with a sort of backbone.

#### CLIMATIC CONDITIONS

Now let us bring in another fact, the fact that the Martian year is just twice the length of ours and alternates between hot summer sunshine, like the sunshine we experience on high mountains, and a long, frost-bitten winter. The day, too, has the length of a terrestrial day, and because of the thin air will have just the quick changes from heat to cold we find on this planet on the high mountains. This means that all these birds and beasts must be adapted to great changes of temperature. To meet that they must be covered with some thick, air-holding, non-conducting covering, something analogous to fur or feathers, which they can molt or thin out in summer and renew for the winter's bitterness. This is much more probable than that they will be scaly or bare-skinned like our earthly lizards and snakes; and since they will need to have fur or down outside their frameworks, their skeletons, which will be made up of very light slender bones, will probably be within. Moreover, the chances are that they will be fitted with the best known contrivances for protecting their young in the earliest stages from cold and danger. On earth the best known arrangement is the one that prevails among most of the higher land

animals, the device of bringing forth living young at a high stage of development. This is the "hard life" arrangement as distinguished from the easy-going, sunshiny, tropical, lay-an-egg-and-leave-it method, and Martian conditions are evidently harder than ours. So these big-chested, furry or feathery or downy Martian animals will probably be very like our mammalia in these respects. All this runs off easily and plausibly from the facts we know.

#### THE RULING INHABITANTS

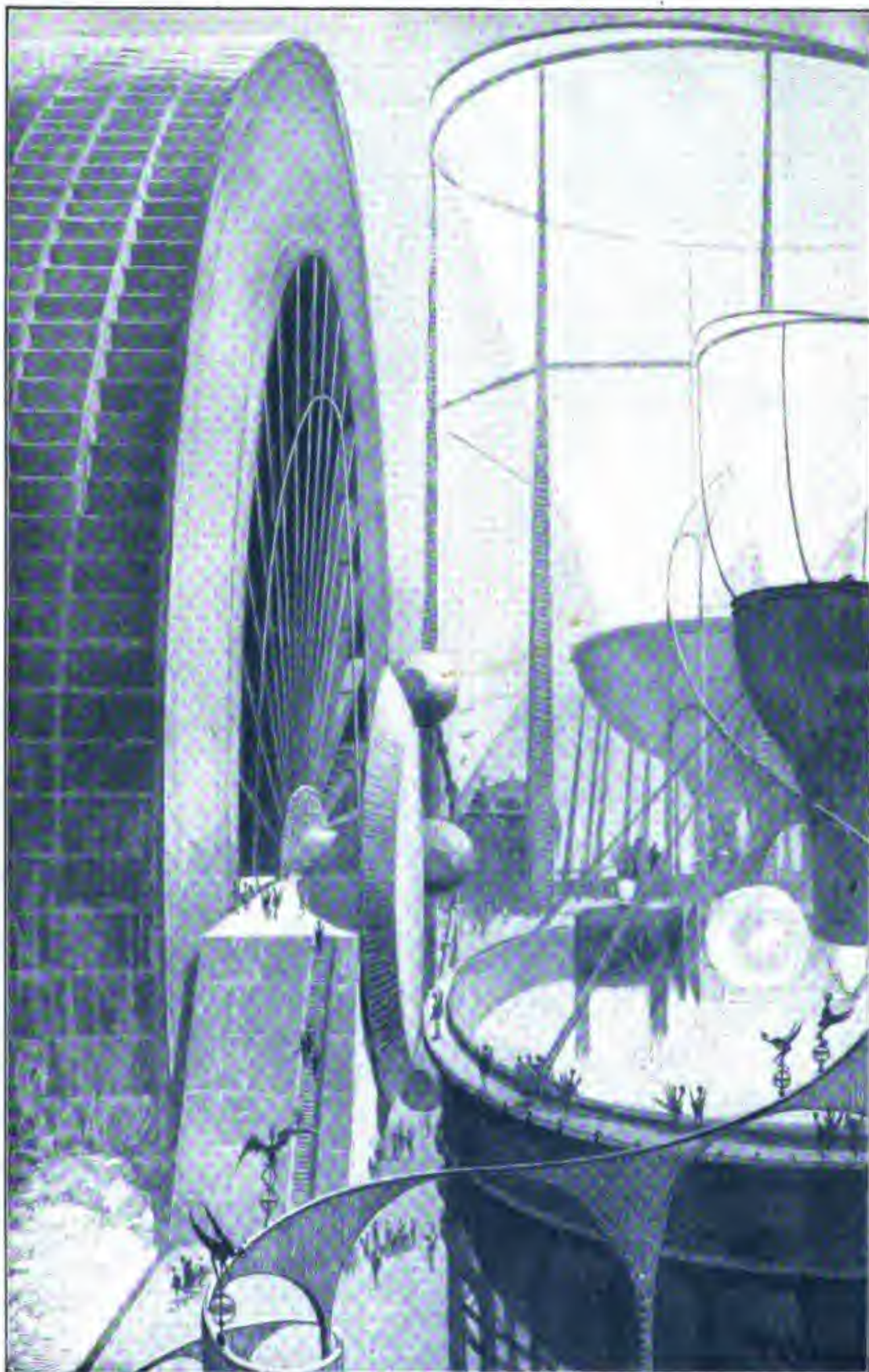
And now we are in a better position to consider those ruling inhabitants who made the gigantic canal-system of Mars, those creatures of human or superhuman intelligence, who, unless Mr. Lowell is no more than a fantastic visionary, have taken Mars in hand to rule and order and cultivate systematically and completely, as I believe some day man will take this earth. Clearly these ruling beings will have been evolved out of some species or other of those mammal-like animals, just as man has been evolved from among the land animals of this globe. Perhaps they will have exterminated all those other forms of animal life as man is said to be exterminating all the other forms of animal life here. I have written above of floods and swamps and jungles to which life has adapted itself, but perhaps that stage is over now upon Mars altogether. It must have been a long and life-molding stage, but now it may be at an end. Mr. Lowell, judging by the uniform and orderly succession of what he calls the "fallow" brown and then of the bluish green tints upon the low-lying areas of Mars, is inclined to think that this is the case and that all the fertile area of the planet has been reclaimed from nature and is under cultivation.

#### HOW LIKE TERRESTRIAL HUMANITY?

How far are these beings likely to resemble terrestrial humanity?

There are certain features in which they are likely to resemble us. The quasi-mammalian origin we have supposed for them implies a quasi-human appearance. They will probably have heads and eyes and backboned bodies, and since they must have big brains, because of their high intelligence, and since almost all creatures with big brains tend to have them forward in their heads near their eyes, these Martians will





CONDITIONS ON MARS ARE SUCH THAT THE INHABITANTS COULD UTILIZE THE DIRECT ENERGY OF THE SUN'S RAYS TO DRIVE MACHINERY FOR FILLING THE CANALS



probably have big shapely skulls. But they will in all likelihood be larger in size than humanity two and two-thirds times the mass of a man, perhaps. That does not mean, however, that they will be two and two-thirds times as tall, but, allowing for the laxer texture of things on Mars, it may be that they will be half as tall again when standing up. And as likely as not they will be covered with feathers or fur. I do not know, I do not know if anyone knows, why man, unlike the generality of mammals, is a bare-skinned animal. I can find, however, no necessary reason to make me believe the Martians are bare-skinned.

Will they stand up or go on four legs or six? I know of no means of answering that question with any certainty. But there are considerations that point to the Martian's being a biped. There seems to be a general advantage in a land-going animal having four legs; it is the prevailing pattern on earth, and even among the insects there is often a tendency to suppress one pair of the six legs and use only four for going. However, this condition is by no means universal. A multitude of types, like the squirrel, the rat, and the monkey, can be found which tend to use the hind legs chiefly for walking and to sit up and handle things with the fore limbs. Such species tend to be exceptionally intelligent. There can be no doubt of the immense part the development of the hand has played in the education of the human intelligence. So that it would be quite natural to imagine the Martians as big-headed, deep-chested bipeds, grotesquely caricaturing humanity with arms and hands.

But that is only one of several almost equally plausible possibilities. One thing we may rely upon: the Martians must have *some* prehensile organ, primarily because the development of intelligence is almost unthinkable without it, and, secondly, because in no other way could they get their engineering done. It is stranger to our imaginations, but no less reasonable, to suppose, instead of a hand, an elephant-like proboscis, or a group of tentacles or proboscis-like organs. Nature has a limitless imagination, never repeats exactly, and perhaps, after all, the chances lie in the direction of a greater unlikeness to the human shape than these forms I have ventured to suggest.

How wild and extravagant all this reads!

One tries to picture feather-covered men nine or ten feet tall, with proboscides and several feet, and one feels a kind of disgust of the imagination. Yet wild and extravagant as these dim visions of unseen creatures may seem, it is logic and ascertained fact that forces us toward the belief that *some such creatures are living now*. And, after all, has the reader ever looked at a cow and tried to imagine how it would feel to come upon such a creature with its knobs and horns and queer projections suddenly for the first time?

#### MARTIAN CIVILIZATION

I have purposely abstained in this paper from going on to another possibility of Martian life. Man on this earth has already done much to supplement his bodily deficiencies with artificial aids—clothes, boots, tools, corsets, false teeth, false eyes, wigs, armor, and so forth. The Martians are probably far more intellectual than men and more scientific, and beside their history the civilization of humanity is a thing of yesterday. What may they not have contrived in the way of artificial supports, artificial limbs, and the like?

Finally, here is a thought that may be reassuring to any reader who finds these Martians alarming. If a man were transferred suddenly to the surface of Mars he would find himself immensely exhilarated so soon as he had got over a slight mountain-sickness. He would weigh not one-half what he does upon the earth, he would prance and leap, he would lift twice his utmost earthly burden with ease. But if a Martian came to the earth his weight would bear him down like a cope of lead. He would weigh two and two-thirds times his Martian weight, and he would probably find existence insufferable. His limbs would not support him. Perhaps he would die, self-crushed, at once. When I wrote "The War of the Worlds," in which the Martians invade the earth, I had to tackle this difficulty. It puzzled me for a time, and then I used that idea of mechanical aids, and made my Martians mere bodiless brains with tentacles, subsisting by suction without any digestive process and carrying their weight about, not on living bodies but on wonderfully devised machines. But for all that, as a reader here and there may recall, terrestrial conditions were in the end too much for them.





HE THRUST FORWARD HIS HEAD AND SAW THE REFLECTION OF HIS  
FACE, AS IN A MIRROR



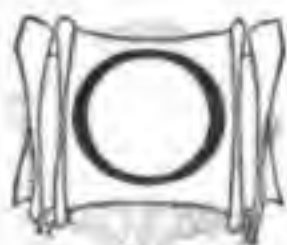


# *The Man*

## *By Ambrose Bierce*

Illustrated by N.H. MacGILVARY

### I.—THE REVIEW AS A FORM OF WELCOME



ONE summer night a man stood on a low hill overlooking a considerable expanse of forest and field. By the full moon hanging low in the west he knew what he might not have known otherwise: that it was near the hour of dawn. A light mist lay along the earth, partly veiling the lower features of the landscape, but above it the taller trees showed in well-defined masses against a clear sky. Two or three farmhouses were visible through the haze, but in none of them, naturally, was a light. Nowhere, indeed, was any sign or suggestion of life except the barking of a distant dog, which, repeated with mechanical iteration, served rather to accentuate than dispel the loneliness of the scene.

The man looked curiously about him on all sides, as one who among familiar surroundings is unable to determine his exact place and part in the scheme of things. It is so, perhaps, that we shall act when, risen from the dead, we await the call to judgment.

A hundred yards away was a straight road, gleaming white in the moonlight. Endeavoring to orient himself, as a surveyor or navigator might say, the man moved his eyes slowly along its visible length and, at a distance of a quarter-mile to the south of his station, saw, dim and gray in the haze, a group of horsemen riding to the north. Behind them were men afoot, marching in column, with gleaming rifle-barrels aslant above their shoulders. They moved slowly and in silence. Another group of horsemen, another regiment of infantry, another and another—all in unceasing motion toward the

man's point of view, past it, and beyond. A battery of artillery followed, the cannoneers riding with folded arms on limber and caisson. And still the interminable procession came out of the obscurity to south and passed into the obscurity to north, with never a sound of voice, or hoof, or wheel.

The man could not rightly understand: he thought himself deaf, said so, and heard his own voice, although it had an unfamiliar quality that almost alarmed him; it disappointed his ear's expectancy in the matter of timbre—of resonance. But he was not deaf, and that for the moment sufficed.

Then he remembered that there are natural phenomena to which some one has given the name "acoustic shadows." If you stand in an acoustic shadow there is one direction from which you will hear nothing. At the battle of Gaines's Mill, one of the fiercest conflicts of the Civil War, with a hundred guns in play, spectators a mile and a half away on the opposite side of the Chickahominy Valley heard nothing of what they saw. The bombardment of Port Royal, heard and felt at St. Augustine, one hundred and fifty miles to the south, was inaudible two miles to the north in a still atmosphere. A few days before the surrender at Appomattox a thunderous engagement between the commands of Sheridan and Pickett was unknown to the latter commander a mile in the rear of his own line.

These instances were unknown to the man of whom we write, but less striking ones of the same character had not escaped his observation. He was profoundly disquieted, but for another reason than the uncanny silence of that moonlight march.

"Good Lord!" he said to himself—and again it was as if another had spoken his thought—"if those people are what I take



them to be we have lost the battle and they are moving on Nashville!"

Then came a thought of self—an apprehension—a strong sense of personal peril, such as in another we call fear. He stepped quickly into the shadow of a tree. And still the silent battalions moved slowly forward in the haze.

The chill of a sudden breeze upon the back of his neck drew his attention to the quarter whence it came, and turning to the east he saw a faint gray light along the horizon—the first sign of returning day. This increased his apprehension.

"I must get away from here," he thought, "or I shall be discovered and taken."

He moved out of the shadow, walking rapidly toward the graying east. From the safer seclusion of a clump of cedars he looked back. The entire column had passed out of sight: the straight white road lay bare and desolate in the moonlight!

Puzzled before, he was now inexpressibly astonished. So swift a passing of so slow an army!—he could not understand it. Minute after minute passed unnoted; he had lost his sense of time. He sought with a terrible earnestness a solution of the mystery, but sought in vain. When at last he roused himself from his abstraction the sun's rim was visible above the hills, but in the new conditions he found no other light than that of day; his understanding was involved as darkly in doubt as before.

On every side lay cultivated fields showing no sign of war and war's ravages. From the chimneys of the farmhouses thin ascensions of blue smoke signaled preparations for a day's peaceful toil. Having stilled its immemorial allocution to the moon, the watch-dog was assisting a negro who, prefixing a team of mules to the plow, was flattening and sharpening contentedly at his task. The hero of this tale stared stupidly at the pastoral picture as if he had never seen such a thing in all his life; then he put his hand to his head, passed it through his hair and, withdrawing it, attentively considered the palm—a singular thing to do. Apparently reassured by the act, he walked confidently toward the road.

## II.—WHEN YOU HAVE LOST YOUR LIFE CONSULT A PHYSICIAN

Dr. Stilling Malson, of Murfreesboro, having visited a patient six or seven miles

away, on the Nashville road, had remained with him all night. At daybreak he set out for home on horseback, as is the custom of doctors of the time and region. He had passed the national cemetery on the Stone River battlefield when a man approached him from the roadside and saluted in the military fashion, with a movement of the right hand to the hat-brim. But the hat was not a military hat, the man was not in uniform and had not a martial bearing. The doctor nodded civilly, half-thinking that the stranger's uncommon greeting was perhaps in deference to the historic surroundings; and as the stranger evidently desired speech with him he courteously reined in his horse and waited.

"Sir," said the stranger, "although a civilian, you are perhaps an enemy."

"I am a physician," was the non-committal reply.

"Thank you," said the other. "I am Lieutenant Bannister, of the staff of General Hazen." He paused a moment and looked sharply at the person whom he was addressing, then added, "Of the Federal army."

The physician merely nodded.

"Kindly tell me," continued the other, "what has happened here. Where are the armies? Which won the battle?"

The physician regarded his questioner curiously with half-shut eyes. After a professional scrutiny, prolonged to the limit of politeness, "Pardon me," he said; "one asking information should be willing to impart it. Are you wounded?"

"Not seriously—it seems."

The man removed the unmilitary hat, put his hand to his head, passed it through his hair and, withdrawing it, attentively considered the palm.

"I was struck by a bullet and have been unconscious. It must have been a light, glancing blow: I find no blood and feel no pain. I will not trouble you for treatment, but will you kindly direct me to my command—to any part of the Federal army—if you know?"

Again the doctor did not immediately reply: he was recalling much that is recorded in the books of his profession—something about lost identity and the effect of familiar scenes in restoring it. At length he looked the man in the face, smiled, and said,

"Lieutenant, you are not wearing the uniform of your rank and service."



At this the man glanced down at his civilian attire, lifted his eyes, and said with hesitation:

"That is true. I—I don't quite understand."

Still regarding him sharply but not unsympathetically, the man of science bluntly inquired,

"How old are you?"

"Twenty-three—if that has anything to do with it."

"You don't look it; I should hardly have guessed you to be just that."

The man was growing impatient. "We need not discuss that," he said; "I want to know about the army. Not two hours ago I saw a column of troops moving northward on this road. You must have met them. Be good enough to tell me the color of their clothing, which I was unable to make out, and I'll trouble you no more."

"You are quite sure that you saw them?"

"Sure? My God, sir, I could have counted them!"

"Why, really," said the physician, with an amusing consciousness of his own resemblance to the loquacious barber of the Arabian Nights, "this is very interesting. I met no troops."

The man looked at him coldly, as if he had himself observed the likeness to the barber. "It is plain," he said, "that you do not care to assist me. Sir, you may go to the devil!"

He turned and strode away, very much at random, across the dewy fields, his half-penitent tormentor quietly watching him from his point of vantage in the saddle till he disappeared beyond an array of trees.

### III.—THE DANGER OF LOOKING INTO A POOL OF WATER

After leaving the road the man slackened his pace, and now went forward, rather deviously, with a distinct feeling of fatigue. He could not account for this, though truly the interminable loquacity of that country doctor offered itself in explanation. Seating himself upon a rock, he laid one hand upon

his knee, back upward, and casually looked at it. It was lean and withered. He lifted both hands to his face. It was seamed and furrowed; he could trace the lines with the tips of his fingers. How strange!—a mere bullet-stroke and a brief unconsciousness do not make one a physical wreck.

"I must have been a long time in hospital," he said aloud. "Why, what a fool I am! The battle was in December, and it is now summer!" He laughed. "No wonder that fellow thought me an escaped lunatic. He was wrong: I am only an escaped patient."

At a little distance a small plot of ground enclosed by a wall caught his attention. With no very definite intent he rose and went to it. In the center was a square, solid monument of hewn stone. It was brown with age, weather-worn at the angles, spotted with moss and lichen. Between the massive blocks were strips of grass, the leverage of whose roots had pushed them apart. In answer to the challenge of this ambitious structure Time had laid his destroying hand upon it and it would soon be "one with Nineveh and Tyre." In an inscription on one side his eye caught a familiar name. Shaking with excitement, he craned his body across the wall and read:

HAZEN'S BRIGADE  
to  
The Memory of Its Soldiers  
who fell at  
Stone River, Dec. 31, 1862.

The man fell back from the wall, faint and sick. Almost within an arm's length was a little depression in the earth; it had been filled by a recent rain—a pool of clear water. He crept to it to revive himself, lifted the upper part of his body on his trembling arms, thrust forward his head and saw the reflection of his face, as in a mirror. He uttered a terrible cry. His arms gave way; he fell, face downward, into the pool.

And within that hospitable wall, among the comrades of his youth, he sleeps no less soundly than they.





# Little Tales



## Three and One are One

By Ambrose Bierce

Illustrated by G. Patrick Nelson

**I**N the year 1861 Barr Lassiter, a young man of twenty-two, lived with his parents and an elder sister near Carthage, Tennessee. The family were in somewhat humble circumstances, subsisting by the cultivation of a small and not very fertile plantation. Owning no slaves, they were not rated among the "best people" of their neighborhood, but they were honest persons of good education, fairly well mannered, and as respectable as a family could be if uncredentialed by personal dominion over the sons and daughters of Ham. The elder Lassiter had something of that austerity of manner that so frequently affirms an uncompromising devotion to duty and conceals a warm and affectionate disposition. He was of the iron of which martyrs are made, but in the heart of the matrix had lurked a nobler metal, fusible at a milder heat, yet never coloring nor softening the harsh exterior of the casting. By both heredity and environment something of the man's inflexible character had been imparted to the other members of his family; the Lassiter home, though not devoid of domestic affection, was a veritable citadel of duty, and duty—ah, duty is as cruel as death!

When the war came it found in the Lassiter

family, as in so many others in that state, a divided sentiment: the young man was loyal to the Union, the others were savagely hostile. This unhappy division begot an insupportable domestic bitterness, and when the offending son and brother left home with the avowed purpose of joining the Federal army not a hand was laid in his, not a word of farewell was spoken, not a good wish followed him out into the world whither he went to meet, with such spirit as he might, whatever fate awaited him.

Making his way to Nashville, already occupied by the army of General Buell, he enlisted in the first organization that he found, a Kentucky regiment of cavalry, and in due time passed through all the stages of military evolution from raw recruit to experienced trooper. A right good trooper he was, too, although in his oral narrative from which this tale is made there was no mention of that; the fact was learned from his surviving comrades. For Barr Lassiter long ago answered "Here!" to the sergeant whose name is Death.

Two years after he had joined it, his regiment passed through the region whence he had come. The country thereabout had suffered severely from the ravages of war, having been occupied alternately and simultaneously by the belligerent forces, and a



sanguinary struggle had occurred in the immediate vicinity of the Lassiter homestead. But of this the young trooper, serving far away, knew nothing.

Finding himself in camp near his home, he felt an irrepressible longing to see his parents and sister, hoping that in them, as in him, the unnatural animosities of the period had been softened by time and separation. Obtaining leave of absence, he set out afoot in the late summer afternoon, and soon after the rising of the full moon was walking up the gravel path leading to the dwelling in which he had been born.

Soldiers in war age rapidly, and in youth two years are a long time. Barr Lassiter felt himself an old man and had almost expected to find the place a ruin and a desolation. Nothing, apparently, was changed, and at the sight of each dear and familiar object he was profoundly affected. His heart beat audibly, his emotion nearly suffocated him; a strangling ache was in his throat. Unconsciously he quickened his pace until he almost ran, his long shadow appearing to be making grotesque efforts to keep its place beside him.

The house was unlighted, the door open. As he approached and paused to recover control of himself his father came out and stood bareheaded in the moonlight.

"Father!" cried the young man, springing forward with outstretched hand. "Father!"

The elder man looked him sternly in the face, stood a moment motionless, and without a word withdrew into the house. Bitterly disappointed, humiliated, inexpressibly hurt, and altogether unnerved, the soldier dropped upon a rustic seat in deep dejection, supporting his head with his trembling hand. But he would not have it so: he was too good a soldier to accept repulse as defeat. He rose and entered the house, passing directly to the sitting-room.

It was dimly lighted by an uncurtained window. On a low stool by the hearthside sat his mother, staring into a fireplace strewn

with blackened embers and cold ashes. He spoke to her, tenderly, interrogatively, and with hesitation, but she neither answered, nor moved, nor seemed in any way surprised. True, there had been time for her husband to apprise her of their guilty son's return. He moved nearer and was about to lay his hand upon her arm when his sister entered from an adjoining room, looked him full in the face, passed him without a sign of recognition, and left the room by a door that was partly behind him. He had turned his head to watch her, but when she was gone his eyes again sought his mother. She too had left the place.

Barr Lassiter strode to the door by which he had entered. The moonlight on the lawn was tremulous, as if the sward were a rippling sea. The trees and their black shadows shook as in a breeze. The gravel walk, blended with its borders, seemed unsteady and insecure to step on. This hardy and courageous soldier knew the optical illusions produced by tears. He felt them on his cheek and saw them sparkle on the breast of his trooper's jacket. He left the house and made his way back to camp.

The next day, with no very definite intention, with no dominant feeling that he could



HIS SISTER PASSED HIM WITHOUT A SIGN OF RECOGNITION AND LEFT THE ROOM



rightly have named, he again sought the spot. Within a quarter-mile of it he met Bushrod Albro, a former playfellow and schoolmate, who greeted him warmly.

"I am going to visit my home," said the soldier.

The other looked at him rather sharply, but said nothing.

"I know," continued Lassiter, "that my folks have not changed, but——"

"There have been changes," Albro interrupted; "everything changes. I'll go with you if you don't mind. We can talk as we go."

But Albro did not talk.

Instead of a house they found only fire-blackened foundations of stone, enclosing an area of compact ashes pitted by rains.

Lassiter's astonishment was extreme.

"I could not find the right way to tell you," said Albro. "In the fight a year ago your house was burned by a Federal shell."

"And my family—where are they?"

"In heaven, I trust. They were all killed by the shell."



## The Means and the End

By H. M. Stevens

Illustrated by Horace Taylor

**A**BOUT the Bentleys was an air of gloom and depression that was out of keeping with the beauty of the day and the charm of the surroundings. The cause of the despondency seemed to be an innocent enough looking little blue document. Perhaps it was a bit vivid as to color and a trifle overperfumed, but it was the contents that had dropped a leaden weight upon the spirits of the usually light-hearted Mrs. Tom and the six feet of indolence in the hammock known as Mrs. Tom's husband.

"She hears this is an unusually attractive place in which to spend the summer. They think of building and would like so much to be near us, and hearing we have some extra acres we would like to dispose of, has written to inquire about them," quoted Mrs. Tom from the bit of blue paper.

"Oh——" Tom caught himself just in time to swallow what must have been a very brimstonish morsel.

"Say it, do. I don't care if it isn't exactly fit for publication. The two biggest bores in the whole of Greater New York."

"Couldn't you leave out Brooklyn and Hoboken?"

"Don't interrupt, Tom. I didn't sit next Mr. Tompkins at the Westleys' dinner for nothing, and they are pig-headed enough to have anything we say against their liking it out here act as a further spur to induce them to try it."

There was a pause for a moment, then Mrs. Bentley broke out again: "I simply cannot stand having them here. I will sell out rather than spend my summers next door to that high-pitched voice and all-pervading personality."

Tom's only answer was a groan and the consoling remark that they would probably come down immediately, and having once seen the place— The rest was silence.

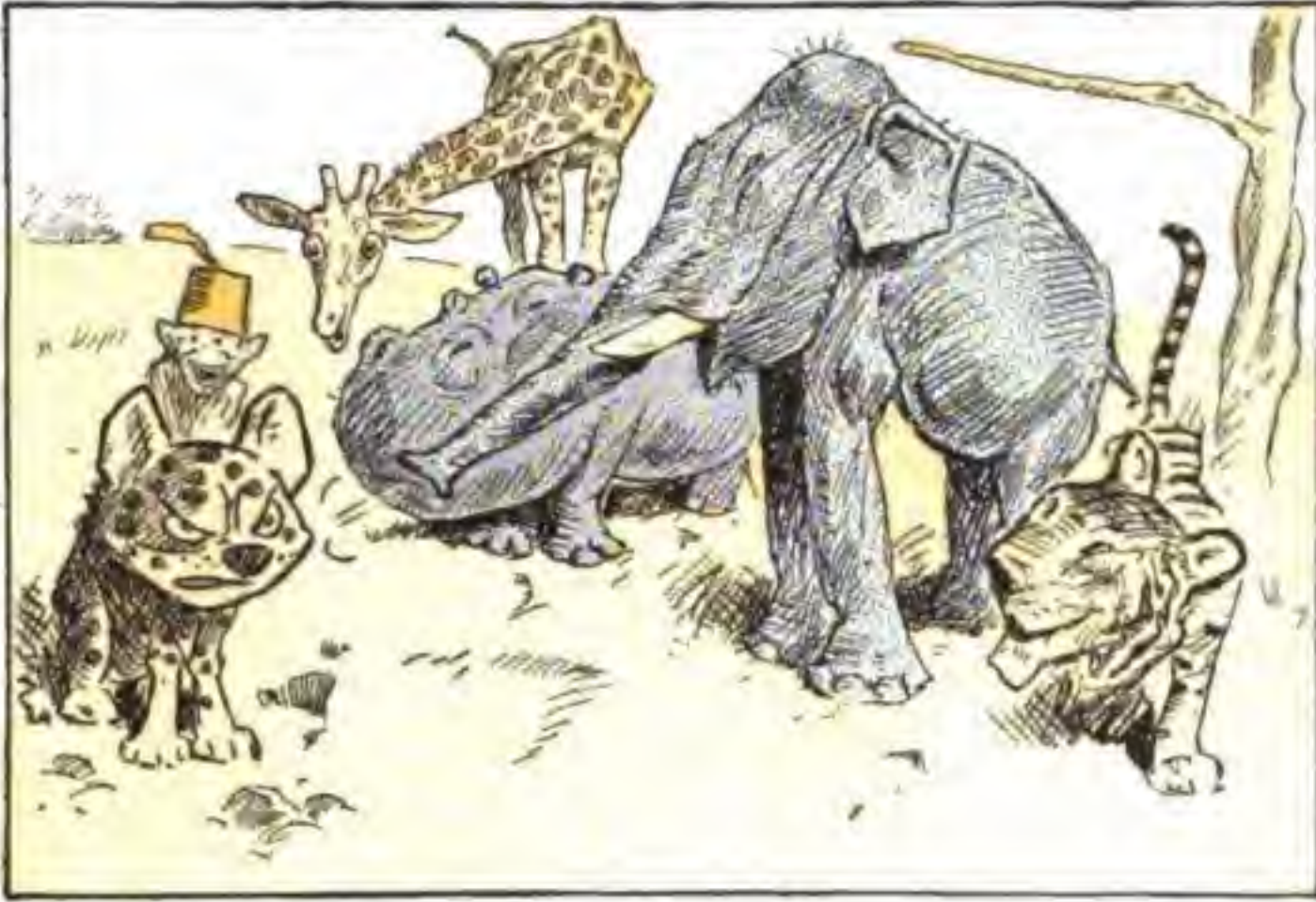
Mrs. Tom sat thinking desperately. Suddenly an intent expression ended in an infec-



# How the Hyæna Came to Laugh

By Oliver Herford

Drawings by T. S. Sullivant



I

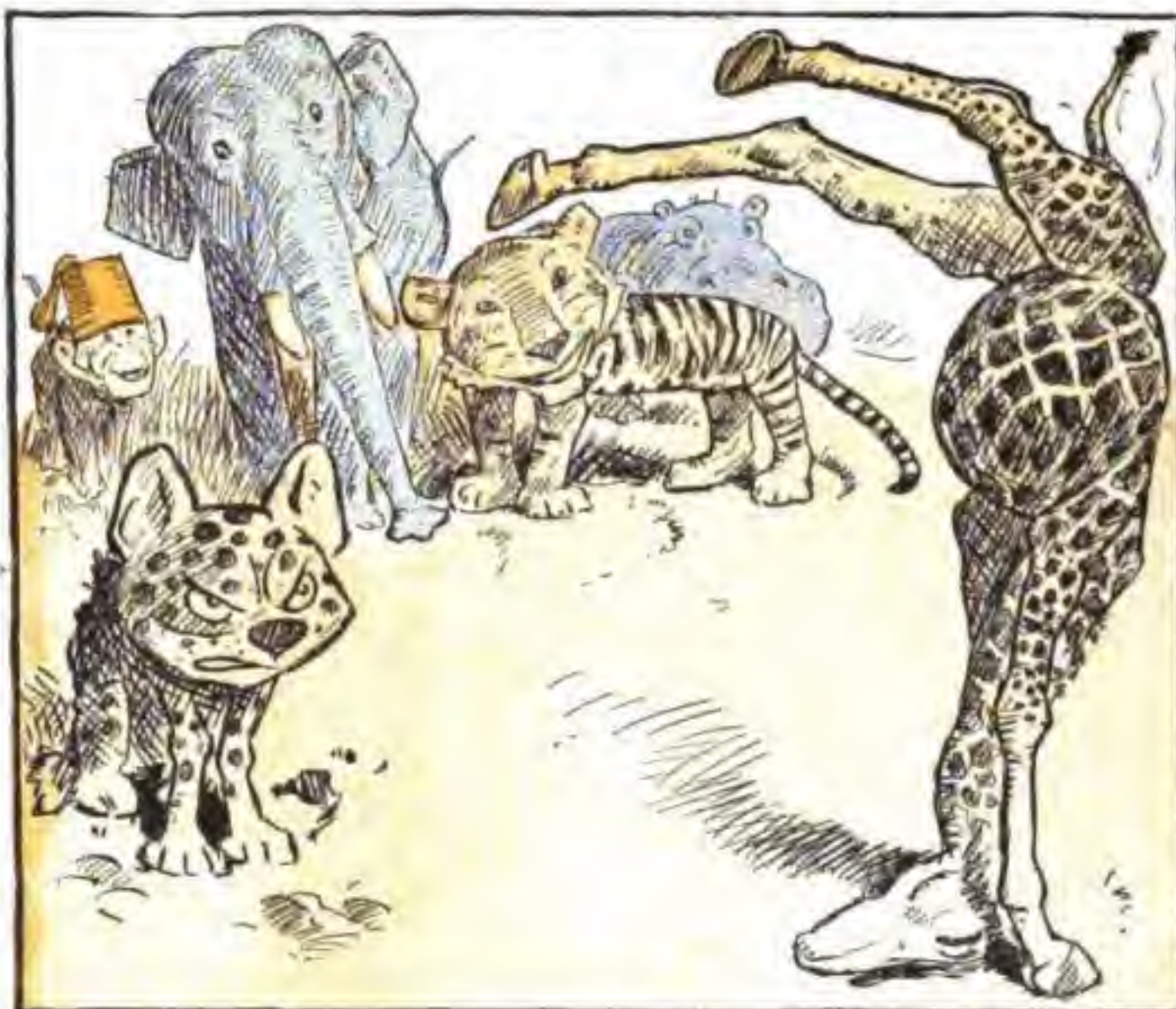
When the first Hyæna tried to laugh his features got so tangled  
He sent for Doctor Elephant, whose methods were newfangled.  
Said he, "You have a Diphthong, and your vocal chords are jangled."



II

To give his features exercise and start his risibility,  
Br'er Tiger did a cake-walk with abandon and agility.  
But the only symptom it induced was sheer irascibility.





### III

Said Marse Giraffe, "I'll make him laugh, my turn is acrobatic."  
Then stood upon his head, a feat that earned applause emphatic  
From all save the Hyæna, who grew still more phlegmatic.



### IV

Don Hippo did his swallowing act, that caused the crowd to bellow,  
But the bored Hyæna only turned a deeper shade of yellow.  
Herr Monkey whispered in his ear, "Cheer up! I'm next, old fellow."





V

Herr Monkey then with ease and grace a swinging branch ascended,  
And o'er Don Hippo's open mouth a cocoanut suspended,  
The while on the Hyæna's face disgust and gloom were blended.



VI

"Now!" cried Herr Monkey from his perch, "I'll show you something funny."  
He little dreams the branch is cracked. Look out; it's breaking, sonny!  
The face of the Hyæna lights—here's something for his money.





# VII

A piercing scream, a sudden sound of snapping jaws affrighting.  
 Don Hippo's smile's an epitaph as plain as any writing,  
 And joy ineffable the dull Hyæna's face is lighting.



# VIII

To-day when the Hyæna laughs there's a peculiarity  
 About his glee that makes us flee from his uncouth hilarity;  
 We seem to hear a scream of fear in his mirthless jocularity.





Once there was a wizard who was older than the tops of hills, all fairies, gnomes, elves, and goblins had to come when he called, and all such creatures as were in various ways unlikely.

But alas! He was so old that he had gotten over being pleased. No goblin could possibly scare him, no fairy was so lovely as to make him smile.

This was very bad, because he remembered. So he went and got a very young child and called forth some of those beautiful and amusing creatures, and he said, "Oh, very young child, let's take turns looking through your eyes." And the very young child said, "A'right."

Then he tried to look through the eyes of the very young child, but nothing scared him, and nothing made him smile.

Then his face was like dead ashes, and he said, "It is your turn."

And the very young child was happy as the towers of heaven are tall.

Arthur Colton.

Drawn by Rose Cecil O'Neill

THE WIZARD AND THE CHILD





"HE LOOKS AS IF HE'D SEEN A GHOST," SAID THE SCULPTOR LAUGHING

*("The Delusion of Ralph Penryn")*



# The Delusion of Ralph Penwyn

By Julian Hawthorne

Illustrated by Frank Snapp



TEN years ago Ralph Penwyn was still a very handsome man. For that matter, he was a little past thirty, but looked forty; his dark hair had begun to turn gray on the front part of his head, and there were lines of maturity in his face. His ancestors were black Celts of Cornwall, and he had their tall, athletic frame, black, kindling eyes, and passionate, artistic temperament.

He had studied art, and after visiting Europe had painted some good pictures. One of them, "The Profanation," had been commended by the great Watts. "About as compelling an imaginative thing," he said of it, "as ever I saw." I had not at that time seen it myself; but had been told that the composition centered about a female figure, beautiful and tragic.

It was the last thing Ralph painted. "What we call a work of art," said he, "is but a by-product. Art is a spiritual culture whose best conceptions are never brought down to the physical plane." This may have been esoteric philosophy, or it may have been an excuse for indolence—of that intellectual kind that often accompanies great powers.

Ralph had money and did not have to work. He got a volunteer commission and went through the Spanish War, performing conspicuous exploits; in all he did he was conspicuous, though indifferent. Instead of accepting promotion he resigned and went to India, and was not heard from for some years. He never told what he did there or what happened to him.

Is there really a school or brotherhood of adepts in India? Is Yoga and all that sort of thing truth or a fairy-tale?

He returned unannounced to New York and took up his abode in one of the family heirlooms, an old brownstone house on Sec-

ond Avenue. He refitted and furnished it in accordance with his taste, and gave a few informal receptions, attended by a score of his friends—all men. He entertained us with some curious "border-land" scientific experiments which would have been called magic a few years ago. For my own part, I thought I saw something in a crystal sphere which was not to be explained upon any scientific basis that I know of. But what is the use of being surprised at anything nowadays? Hypnotism, incarnate or disincarnate, accounts for everything.

For the rest, we had good punch and cigars and very fetching music, coming and going like a breeze from another world; the musicians were behind a screen—if there were any musicians! Ralph, as host, was genial but quieter than of old, and personally quite matter of fact—perhaps from a motive of artistic contrast to the entertainment. He told us interesting but credible things about his adventures abroad, and discussed art, literature, politics, every-day matters. All the time I was thinking of the woman's face I had imagined I saw in the crystal sphere. Had I met its possessor somewhere? Who? and where?

I walked home that night with a famous sculptor (now dead) who knew Ralph more intimately than I did. "Did Ralph ever have a romance—anything with a woman in it?" I asked him.

"A fellow of his strong masculine fiber naturally would have—and probably not more than one."

"Which would make up by its intensity for its uniqueness?"

"And by the tragedy of it—unless it happened just right."

"His wasn't just right?"

"I could give you no more than a guess; and I suppose it isn't a thing one has any right to guess about."

That was all I got from the man of bronze and marble.



Next evening I made my regular weekly call on old Mrs. Montrose Capet. She was a patrician of Virginia, rich, exclusive, fastidious, and, at seventy, a bit eccentric; to persons she liked, the best and kindest of women. One thing about her I had never quite approved—that sixth sense which she possessed in addition to the ordinary five; for I am not fond of the occult. Few persons then living, however, knew that she had the “faculty,” and our own intercourse had never looked in that direction. I sought her for her normal and unusual gifts of conversation and human nature.

I found her alone; the former queen of society had few familiars left now. Teapot and cups were ready on the Oriental stand in the little gold-room, as she called her boudoir. We were happy and cozy for ten minutes; then I noticed signs of uneasiness in her. She kept putting her hand to her forehead.

“Headache?”

“Not exactly,” she replied; “but you’ve been up to something. And you’ve brought it with you, the—what do you call it?—the aura, you know. Mercy, how strong!”

She brushed her fingers across her eyes once or twice.

“H’m—yes—oh, yes! My dear boy, I really beg your pardon! Do you want me to go on? or shall I switch it off?”

I was polite enough to beg her not to switch it off, whatever it was.

She brought the fingers of her right hand close together and pressed them to the center of her forehead; then she began a muttering, half to herself, half to me. “It’s really so exceptional I must have a look at it. A handsome boy that! Oh, a studio, of course, and she’s his model. Well, he can certainly paint! But what a theme! Terrible! In earnest about it, too! Ah—h’m! What I expected. This will end badly. All his fault, but he’ll regret it. And she—oh, my heart! Oh!”

Mrs. Capet’s hand dropped to her lap, and she leaned back in her chair.

I felt rather embarrassed. “So it will end badly?” I murmured.

“Eh? No, say no more about it. I’ve had quite enough. Mercy, what people! I advise you to cut his acquaintance. Ended? No, but it’s coming, and all India can’t prevent it. Have some more tea, my dear. What’s that?”

It was something on me, apparently, for

her eyes—and especially her left eye, suddenly grown preternaturally bright—were fixed upon a point just above my heart. I glanced down in that direction.

I had gone to Ralph’s reception the night before in a Prince Albert coat—the thing being informal—and had on the same garment now. He had presented to each of us a little memento; mine was a silver medallion with some Oriental device figured upon it in relief. I had stuck it in my left lapel buttonhole, hardly examining it at the time, and forgetting all about it afterward.

“The button? Anything wrong with it?” I queried.

My admirable friend pointed at it with a finger that trembled a little. “The whole story is right there,” she said. “No; I’ve had enough for to-day, I tell you! But if anything queer about that person turns up—and it will before long, too—you’ll find the explanation in that button, as you call it. And now,” she added, changing her tone, “please, like a good boy, take the thing out of your buttonhole and put it where I can’t see it; and then we’ll have one more cup of tea.”

I may remark that my subsequent investigation of the physical attributes of my button did not supply me with grounds for supposing that it had any other significance, as accounting for Mrs. Capet’s manifestations, than the fact of its having belonged to Ralph Penwyn; in other words, I had witnessed an illustration by her of what occultists call psychometrizing. The “aura” of his personal equation, or of his character and adventures, had become attached to the material object, and had in some way revealed to her sixth sense this equation or what these adventures were. At all events, the button turned out to be nothing more than a silver disk of antique design and workmanship, decorated with the effigy of some heathen deity squatting in the midst of an inscription in some Oriental language. I leave the further interpretation of the incident to those whose philosophical erudition qualifies them for the task. So far as I understood then, or have learned since, an ordinary bone shirt-stud, if it had previously belonged to Penwyn, would have served the purpose just as well.

I cannot deny, though, that my spontaneous speculativeness concerning Penwyn was a good deal stimulated by Mrs. Capet’s little séance. Her utterances, Orphic though



they had been, served to confirm my suspicion that he had been involved in some romance, and indicated that it had been of a sinister sort. A studio, a beautiful model, a catastrophe—it was not difficult to fill in the gaps. He had used the model, doubtless, for the chief figure in his "Profanation" picture of some years before. This inference prompted in me a strong desire to see the picture, and my eagerness was inflamed by a very fantastic notion; to wit, that the face in the picture would turn out to be identical with the one which I had imagined I saw in the crystal sphere. Fantastic, indeed, nay, irrational and ridiculous, such a notion was, and I was ashamed of it, but could not banish it. I was additionally preoccupied by the impression (already mentioned) that I had met somewhere the original of the specter of the sphere. For if the model for the picture and the original of the specter should prove to be one and the same, not only would Penwyn's romance become extremely interesting, but I should feel that I was, in a manner, mixed up with it myself.

A few days later I happened into the sculptor's studio. He had discerned an idea buried in a great mass of clay, and was digging it out with his customary quiet energy.

"Glad you came in," he said, continuing his work. "What do you think of this Penwyn business?"

"I haven't seen or heard of him since the other evening."

"He was in here yesterday. I feel uneasy about him. His experience in India did him no good. He talked of going back there. A man of his imagination and temperament can't dabble in that sort of thing with impunity. Between you and me, I think it's affecting his mind. He spoke of being 'obsessed by devils' quite in a matter-of-course way, as I might of dyspepsia. He asked me to take charge of one of his pictures, and, if I did not hear from him to the contrary within a given time, to destroy it. It's the finest painting he ever did. He seemed to fancy he was pursued by a fatal destiny—in some peril or other, physical or spiritual. And all the while he was as quiet as possible, outwardly. I don't like it at all. I shall get Harkness to look him over—without letting him suspect it, of course. Poor old Ralph!"

After expressing my surprise, sympathy, and concern, I said: "What picture do you refer to? Has he taken up painting again?"

"No; this is an old one. 'Profanation,' he calls it. I remember it made a sensation in Paris six or seven years back. Did you never see it? That's it, in the corner, with the sheet over it."

I moved the sheet aside, and for the first time saw "The Profanation."

It was a remarkable work, more, however, as regards design than technical execution. A beautiful young woman, in nuns' garb, on the arm of a man in evening dress, stands at the entrance to a masked ball, and proffers to the gate-keeper a goblet of emerald, richly carved, from which emanates a celestial luster. The Holy Grail in exchange for an evening's pleasure! The expression in the three faces, and especially in hers, is wonderfully impressive. The smile on her lips has the pathos of innocent childhood in it, but the sparkle in her eyes carries a hideous significance.

The influence of the picture was so strong that it was some moments before I realized that the nun's face was entirely different from that of the specter of the sphere.

Just then I heard the sculptor say something, and, supposing he had addressed me, I turned round. A lady had entered the studio; she was well known in New York society, and I was myself slightly acquainted with her. In fact, she was Mrs. Benton-Howard. As I turned toward them she greeted me by name, but I stared at her without responding.

"He looks as if he'd seen a ghost," said the sculptor, laughing.

"Something very like one," I replied, pulling myself together. "Isn't there a book called 'Phantasms of the Living'? I saw your face the other night in one of those Japanese crystal balls, Mrs. Howard, but until this instant I hadn't identified it."

"I'm living, I suppose," said she.

"Do you know Ralph Penwyn?" the sculptor asked her.

"Yes—at least, long ago I did. I haven't seen him since before the war."

She spoke without self-consciousness, but it must have been a matter of course to her that men should adore her; she was irresistibly lovely and, for a wonder, as good and wise as she was adorable to the senses. No portrait of her exists because, though every artist who saw her wanted to paint her, and several had induced her to sit, the results of the efforts even of the best of them were such ridiculous caricatures that they



were always rubbed out. "Nobody can paint her," declared incomparable John, shaking his head over his own hopeless failure. "She's a spirit; I don't half believe she has a body!"

I took my leave—the lady and the sculptor had business together—but before I went I gave another long look at "The Profanation." There was certainly not the slightest similarity between the nun on the canvas and the exquisite being known as Edith Benton-Howard. But Penwyn had known both women; one of them had met a tragic fate, and the other—well, her countenance had been conjured into Penwyn's crystal.

The more I mulled over it the keener grew my antipathy to the occult.

About the middle of the winter season the Cadwaladers gave a masked ball at that immense palace of theirs on the upper avenue. The rooms were crowded, for the palace was new, and there was curiosity to see what it looked like. All the persons mentioned in this narrative were there, including even Mrs. Montrose Capet, looking surprisingly well and animated. It was her first social outing for ten years, and I wondered what had induced her to come. When Ralph Penwyn appeared I wondered more than ever.

Except for his greetings to our hosts and nods of recognition to his acquaintances, Penwyn devoted himself almost exclusively to lovely Mrs. Benton-Howard; so pointedly, indeed, that it was generally noticed. It so happened that he wore a Faust costume, and she was Marguerite; so they paired off suitably. There was another Marguerite among the guests, but she kept on her mask and was not identified. The circumstance, however, led to some misapprehensions characteristic of a masked ball.

"They seem to be making up for the time lost in their acquaintance," said I to the sculptor. "I've never seen Mrs. Howard more gracious."

"I've told her about him; she understands," he replied.

"She understands what?"

"Harkness contrived to examine him without his suspecting it," said the sculptor, in my ear. "He admits that the man is insane. He has delusions—there's no doubt about it. There's no great danger at present, but sooner or later he will have to be taken care of. Edith is humoring him,

that's all. He imagines they're in love with each other, poor chap! I tried to prevent his coming here, but it was no use."

"A man needn't be insane to imagine he's in love with Mrs. Howard," I suggested.

But the artist—a very serious-minded man—only shook his head and scratched his beard.

Later in the evening I saw Faust and Marguerite pass toward the conservatory. He was talking to her with deep earnestness; she was listening with her head bent, and fingering the beautiful pearl necklace that she wore. He appeared in love, certainly, but otherwise sane enough. And if she were humoring him it seemed to me she was doing it very well.

I strolled about till I found a place beside Mrs. Capet. "You have made everybody else jealous of the Cadwaladers," I said.

"They needn't be," she replied, with a smile. "I came to see the last scene of the romance. But the very last will not be here."

"I'm told Doctor Harkness regards the case as pathological; Penwyn is of unsound mind."

"It will be so given out at the inquest," returned this appalling old lady. "But we know better. I do, at any rate."

"The inquest?"

"Wait till to-morrow," she said, fixing that wonderful eye upon me.

"You don't mean that Mrs. Howard is in any danger, I hope?"

"People of her sort are never in danger, but—well, you'll see."

Penwyn and Mrs. Howard are not known to have been seen again at the ball, after passing into the conservatory together. It was said, however, that she and her husband (who had spent most of the evening playing cards with three other prosperous merchants in an up-stairs room of the palace) had gone home together about one o'clock. There was another rumor to the effect that a man in the costume of Faust, accompanied by a lady dressed as Marguerite, had entered Penwyn's carriage nearly at the same hour, and been driven south. There was still another report that Penwyn had gone away alone. All that we can be certain of, however, is the fact that Edith Howard was in her own house the next morning and that she appeared much shocked at the news that was brought to her there.

The questionable period is that which in-



tervened between the moment Edith and Ralph disappeared in the conservatory and that when his carriage arrived at his house on Second Avenue. There is only one person who professes to know what took place during that interval. I am now to tell the story that came to me from that source. I do not vouch for its truth, nor shall I attempt to reproduce the exact words of the narrator. Take it, if you please, as a chapter from an ordinary tale of romance, in which the writer claims the conventional omniscience of the fiction-monger; and judge as to its verity according to your own attitude toward the facts and the mysteries of human life.

As Ralph turned, just within the threshold of the conservatory, he observed that his companion had resumed her white-silk mask, with its veil falling below her chin.

"Darling, why do you cover your face? We are alone here."

"Let it be so," she whispered in reply. "There will be time enough afterward. No, you must not kiss me yet. Be patient a little longer."

"You love me, Edith?"

"I love you. I have always loved you. I have never loved any other man. Can you say as much, Ralph?"

"Until we met I never believed love possible for me. But why should we talk like children?" he exclaimed passionately. "A man is not a boy—he has put away boyish things. I knew a woman long ago; she is dead. I have been a student, since then, in the school of the masters, and have created a new being in myself. The laws of darkness are abrogated in the kingdom of light. You and I are free; we make our own world."

"Have you no fear of that dead woman—no regret for her, even?"

"No, neither regret nor fear. I should have done her worse wrong in staying with her than I did in leaving her. It was better for her that her body should die than that our souls should destroy each other. What we called our love would have turned out to be the deadliest enmity."

"If she could speak now, do you think she would confirm your words?" whispered the other after a pause.

"Let her speak, if she will—and can. I would agree to be bound by her verdict. But neither she nor anyone can come between us, beloved. She has long since taken up her new life and forgotten me as I had forgotten her."

"Can a woman who has died for love of a man ever forget him?"

"It was her error killed her, not her love. Oh, let us be done with this! It is our privilege and duty to live in the present, and the future. I have made everything ready. Tomorrow we shall be on our way. There is a heaven on earth, and we will live in it."

She laid her hand over his heart, and her eyes met his through the holes of her mask. "Heaven or hell, I will follow you everywhere," she said. There was a strangeness in her voice, and the hand that rested on him seemed to strike coldness through him. But he was too deeply impassioned to heed it. He led her to the rear entrance of the conservatory, and down a flight of stairs to a door on the side street. There he wrapped round her the domino that he carried on his arm, and they entered his carriage and were driven away.

"At last!" he exclaimed, with passionate exultation.

"Never to be parted again!" she murmured, still with that strangeness in her tones.

For a time they sat silent, her cold hand in his hot one. But as they approached the neighborhood of his home he turned to her.

"Off with the mask now—with all masks!" said he. "Give me the kiss that is my life—and my life to come!"

"You will never forget me?" she said, holding him back for a moment.

"Never, never, never!"

"Take me, then!"

He raised his hands to remove the silken vizard, but it seemed to crumble away at his first contact; and, as he bent forward, his warm lover's breath touched, not the soft pure cheeks of Edith Howard, but—to his madman's stare—the grisly surface of a naked skull. That, too, disintegrated before his eyes, the domino fell together, and a necklace of pearls dropped with a soft rattle to the floor of the carriage.

Such is my rendering, derived from information communicated to me by Mrs. Capet several days after the catastrophe, of what took place in Penwyn's carriage in the small hours of that winter morning; but inasmuch as its credibility depends solely upon our belief in the integrity of the old lady's clairvoyant powers we need lose no time in pronouncing it apocryphal and absurd. A few facts, however, remain to be recorded.

When the carriage arrived at Penwyn's door he failed to alight; upon which, after a



few minutes, the coachman got down from his box and opened the door. He saw the figure of his master seated within; but examination showed that he was dead, and that the hilt of a small dagger was sticking out of his breast. The blade had been driven through his heart. No one else was in the carriage, and the only rational inference was the one which was made at the coroner's inquest (additionally confirmed by the testimony of Doctor Harkness as to the dead man's insanity), that he had committed suicide while in a state of unsound mind.

It was also mentioned in the evidence (though no significance could be attached to it) that a woman's domino was found on the seat of the carriage, beside the body; and that a valuable pearl necklace lay on the floor. Moreover—and this was really odd—on the forehead of Penwyn's body was branded or impressed a small circular mark or stamp, representing—so far as could be discerned—the effigy of an Oriental deity, surrounded by what seemed to be a sentence in an unknown language.

When I told Mrs. Capet about this she nodded, and muttered to herself something that sounded like "The seal of the brotherhood."

A few weeks later I got a note from the sculptor, asking me to come to the studio. "I wanted you to be a witness of my discharge of an obligation imposed upon me by our poor friend Penwyn," he said, when I arrived. "This is the day which he appointed for the destruction of his 'Profanation.' It seems a pity to annihilate so fine a work, but I have it on my conscience, as it were, you know."

The picture had been taken out of its frame, and stood near a large brazier filled with glowing coals.

I scrutinized for the last time, with a very eager interest, I must confess, the face of the nun in the picture. The mingling, in

her smile, of the angel and the dæmon was still perceptible, but I fancied that the former had gained a little upon the latter since I saw the painting last.

"Do you suppose the woman who posed for that figure could have had any connection with Ralph's insanity and death?" I asked.

"My dear fellow! A model? What a wild idea!" he laughed.

"Did you notice the second Marguerite at the Cadwaladers' ball?"

"I believe there were two, now you mention it," said he. "Yes, Mrs. Howard and the other. A masquerade mystification, probably. Well, here goes for the burnt offering."

He cut the canvas from the stretcher, folded it up, and laid it upon the red-hot coals. In a minute it was in flames. And just then Mrs. Howard came hastily into the studio.

After a few commonplaces, her errand came out. "I know Mr. Penwyn had left his picture of 'The Profanation' with you. I want to know whether it can be bought. If so, I would like to have it."

"My dear lady, you are too late," replied the sculptor, waving a hand toward the brazier. "'The Profanation,' at Ralph's request, has become fire and air, like the genius that produced it."

Her face was pale and her eyes dark as she watched the leaping and gradual subsidence of the flames. She twisted her flexible hands together. "It is gone, it is no more!" she murmured at last, as the canvas sank into ashes and became gray. "After all, perhaps that is best. There was something noble in his soul."

She bowed to us and went out. The sculptor glanced at me, elevated his eyebrows, scratched his beard, and ordered his servant to remove the brazier.





tion than I to appreciate the advantages of a library like this. I want to get rid of it, or rather I don't want to but must, and I consulted you as a capable middleman."

The "middleman" threw up his hands.

"What a captain of industry you would have made! Now I don't want this stuff, and I ought to be back in my office this minute, but out of respect for your system, which has the Bowery skinned a mile, I hereby offer you ten dollars for the lot."

"Done," said Evelyn as she accepted the proffered bill.

"Yes, done good—stung!" commented Graybling, reaching for his hat. "What's this?" He paused in his flight toward the door and picked up the pad of paper covered with pothooks.

"That's what you said to the janitor."

"Read it out loud." She obeyed, and the man's face shone. She turned to him in surprise.

"Why, I thought you'd be ashamed," she faltered, "when you heard just what you said."

"Ashamed? When you're the first person I've seen who could get everything I said down cold and then read her notes like an intelligent human being? I'm a hard man to follow." He gazed at her reproachfully. "Why didn't you tell me you were a stenographer?"

"I'm not, but—but—I might be."

Graybling threw his hat down on the mantelpiece. "Now, you're talking," he exclaimed. "My stenographer—she wasn't much good, to be sure—got married yesterday, without giving me any notice. Will you take the job?"

"Well, that depends on how much you will pay." With ten dollars on hand, Evelyn's spirits rose. "I come high." She tilted her head back to look at him as he leaned against the mantelpiece. "And you say yourself you are a hard man to follow."

Graybling rattled the keys in his pocket. "How much do you want?"

"Twenty dollars a week to start with."

"That's twice as much as we paid the last one."

"You said yourself she wasn't any good."

"You think you've got me dead to rights, don't you? Well, it's a bargain. When will you start in?"

"To-morrow morning—only I must tell you that I may leave in November, so don't say I didn't give you any notice."

"You're not going to get married?" he asked in alarm.

Evelyn thought of her much-be-frilled music-pupils. "Hardly," she said.

Graybling's hand was on the knob.

"Then I am sure of

you until November. That is a long way off, and," his eyes softened as they rested on her own, "and—a lot may happen before then."



"MOSTLY DEAD ONES IN THIS BUNCH,"  
HE SAID

## A Stranger

By Ambrose Bierce

A MAN stepped out of the darkness into the little illuminated circle about our failing camp-fire and seated himself upon a rock.

"You are not the first to explore this region," he said gravely.

Nobody controverted his statement; he was himself proof of its truth, for he was not of our party and must have been somewhere near when we camped. Moreover, he must have companions not far away; it was not a place where one would be living or traveling alone. For more than a week we had seen, besides ourselves and our animals, only such living things as rattlesnakes and horned toads. In an Arizona desert one does not long coexist with only such creatures as these; one must have pack animals, supplies, arms—an "outfit." And all these imply comrades. It was perhaps a doubt as to what manner of men this unceremonious stranger's comrades might be, together with something



in his words interpretable as a challenge, that caused every man of our half-dozen "gentlemen adventurers" to rise to a sitting posture and lay his hand upon a weapon—an act signifying, in that time and place, a policy of expectation. The stranger gave the matter no attention and began again to speak in the same deliberate, uninflected monotone in which he had delivered his first sentence.

"Thirty years ago Ramon Gallegos, William Shaw, George W. Kent, and Berry Davis, all of Tucson, crossed the Santa Catalina Mountains and traveled due west, as nearly as the configuration of the country permitted. We were prospecting, and it was our intention, if we found nothing, to push through to the Gila at some point near the Big Bend, where we understood there was a settlement. We had a good outfit, but no guide—just Ramon Gallegos, William Shaw, George W. Kent, and Berry Davis."

The man repeated the names slowly and distinctly, as if to fix them in the memories of his audience, every member of which was now attentively observing him, but with a slackened apprehension regarding his possible companions somewhere in the darkness that seemed to enclose us like a black wall. In the manner of this volunteer historian was no suggestion of an unfriendly purpose. His act was rather that of a harmless lunatic than an enemy. We were not so new to the country as not to know that the solitary life of many

a plainsman had a tendency to develop eccentricities of conduct and character not always easily distinguishable from mental aberration. A man is like a tree: in a forest of his fellows he will grow as straight as his generic and individual nature permits; alone in the open he yields to the deforming stresses and tortions that environ him. Some such thoughts were in my mind as I watched the man from the shadow of my hat, pulled low to shut out the firelight. A witless fellow, no doubt, but

what could he be doing there in the heart of a desert?

Having undertaken to tell this story, I wish that I could describe the man's appearance; that would be a natural thing to do. Unfortunately, and somewhat strangely, I find myself unable to do so with any degree of confidence, for afterward no two of us agreed as to what he wore and how he looked; and when I try to set down my own impressions they elude me. Anyone can tell some kind of story: narration is one of the elemental powers of the race. But the talent for description is a gift.

Nobody having broken silence, the visitor went on to say: "This country was not then what it is now. There was not a ranch between the Gila and the Gulf. There was a little game here and there in the mountains, and near the infrequent water-holes grass enough to keep our animals from starvation. If we should be so fortunate as to encounter no Indians we might get through. But within a week the purpose of the expedition



*Drawings by Dan Sayre Groesbeck*

"DIRECTLY IN FRONT OF US WAS A NARROW OPENING.  
INTO THAT WE RAN"





"'MADRE DE DIOS,' HE SAID, 'COMES NOW THE SOUL OF RAMON GALLEGOS'"

had altered from discovery of wealth to preservation of life. We had gone too far to go back, for what was ahead could be no worse than what was behind; so we pushed on, riding by night to avoid Indians and the intolerable heat, and concealing ourselves by day as best we could. Sometimes, having exhausted our supply of wild meat and

emptied our casks, we were days without food or drink; then a water-hole, or a shallow pool in the bottom of an *arroyo*, so restored our strength and sanity that we were able to shoot some of the wild animals that sought it also. Sometimes it was a bear, sometimes an antelope, a coyote, a cougar—that was as God pleased, all were food.

"One morning as we skirted a mountain range, seeking a practicable pass, we were attacked by a band of Apaches who had followed our trail up a gulch—it is not far from here. Knowing that they outnumbered us ten to one, they took none of their usual cowardly precautions, but dashed upon us at a gallop, firing and yelling. Fighting was out of the question; we urged our feeble animals up the gulch as far as there was footing for a hoof, then threw ourselves out of our saddles and took to the chaparral on one of the slopes, abandoning our entire outfit to the enemy. But we retained our rifles, every man—Ramon Gallegos, William Shaw, George W. Kent, and Berry Davis."

"Same old crowd," said the humorist of our party. He was an Eastern man, unfamiliar with the decent observances of social intercourse. A gesture of disapproval from our leader silenced him, and the stranger proceeded with his tale:

"The savages dismounted also, and some of them ran up the gulch beyond the point at which we had left it, cutting off further retreat in that direction and forcing us on up



"'FORGIVE US OUR SINS,' SAID THEY"



the side. Unfortunately the chaparral extended only a short distance up the slope, and as we came into the open ground above we took the fire of a dozen rifles; but Apaches shoot badly when in a hurry, and God so willed it that none of us fell. Twenty yards up the slope, beyond the edge of the bush, were vertical cliffs, in which, directly in front of us, was a narrow opening. Into that we ran, finding ourselves in a cavern about as large as an ordinary room in a house. Here, for a time, we were safe: a single man with a repeating rifle could defend the entrance against all the Apaches in the land. But against hunger and thirst we had no defense. Courage we still had, but hope was a memory.

"Not one of those Indians did we afterward see, but by the smoke and glare of their fires in the gulch we knew that by day and by night they watched with ready rifles in the edge of the bush—knew that if we made a sortie not a man

of us would live to take two steps into the open. For three days, watching in turn, we held out before our suffering became insupportable. Then—it was the morning of the fourth day—Ramon Gallegos said:

"Señores, I know not well of the good God and what please him. I have live without religion, and I am not acquaint with that of you. Pardon, señores, if I shock you, but for me the time is come to beat the game of the Apache."

"He knelt upon the rock floor of the cave and pressed his pistol against his temple. '*Madre de Dios*,' he said, 'comes now the soul of Ramon Gallegos.'

"And so he left us—William Shaw, George W. Kent, and Berry Davis.

"I was the leader: it was for me to speak. 'He was a brave man,' I said; 'he knew when to die, and how. It is foolish to go mad from thirst and fall by Apache bullets, or be skinned alive—it is in bad taste. Let us join Ramon.'

"That is right,' said William Shaw.

"That is right,' said George W. Kent.

"I straightened the limbs of Ramon Gallegos and put a handkerchief over his face. Then William Shaw said, 'I should like to look like that—a little while.' And George W. Kent said that he felt that way, too.

"It shall be so,' I said; 'the red devils will wait a week. William Shaw and George W. Kent, draw and kneel.'

"They did so and I stood before them. 'Almighty God, our Father,' said I.

"Almighty God, our Father,' said William Shaw and George W. Kent.

"Forgive us our sins,' said I.

"Forgive us our sins,' said they.

"And receive our souls.'

"And receive our souls.'

"Amen!'

"Amen!'

"I laid them beside Ramon Gallegos and covered their faces."

There was a quick commotion on the opposite side of the camp-fire; one of our party had sprung to his feet, pistol in hand.

"And you," he shouted, "you dared to escape? You dare to be alive? You cowardly hound, I'll send you to join them if I hang for it!"





But with the leap of a panther the captain was upon him, grasping his wrist. "Hold it in, Sam Yountsey, hold it in!"

We were now all upon our feet, except the stranger, who sat motionless and apparently inattentive. Some one seized Yountsey's other arm.

"Captain," I said, "there is something wrong here. This fellow is either a lunatic or merely a liar—just a plain every-day liar whom Yountsey has no call to kill. If this man was of that party it had five members, one of whom—probably himself—he has not named."

"Yes," said the captain, releasing the insurgent, who sat down, "there is something unusual. Years ago four dead bodies of white men, scalped and shamefully mutilated, were found about the mouth of that cave. They are buried there; I have seen the graves—we shall all see them to-morrow."

The stranger rose, standing tall in the light of the expiring fire, which in our breathless attention to his story we had neglected to keep going.

"There were four," he said—"Ramon Gallegos, William Shaw, George W. Kent, and Berry Davis."

With this reiterated roll-call of the dead he walked into the darkness, and we saw him no more.

At that moment one of our party, who had been on guard, strode in among us, rifle in hand and somewhat excited. "Captain," he said, "for the last half-hour three men have been standing out there on the *mesa*." He pointed in the direction taken by the stranger. "I could see them distinctly, for the moon is up, but as they had no guns and I had them covered with mine I thought it was their move. They have made none, but, damn it! they have got on to my nerves."

"Go back to your post, and stay till you see them again," said the captain. "The rest of you lie down, or I'll kick you all into the fire."

The sentinel obediently withdrew, swearing. As we were arranging our blankets the fiery Yountsey said,

"I beg your pardon, Captain, but who the devil do you take them to be?"

"Ramon Gallegos, William Shaw, and George W. Kent."

"But how about Berry Davis? I ought to have plugged him."

"Quite needless; you couldn't have made him any deader. Go to sleep."



## The Birthright

By Theodosia Garrison

GOD made my soul for a singing thing,  
A thing to laugh and to play,  
Then gave me my stand in a weary land  
Where none keeps holiday.

Above me ever the biting lash  
For the hand that fain would swerve,  
And the endless toil to deaden and soil  
The soul that needs must serve.

But my birthright still is mine, is mine,  
And I shall not lose it quite,  
In this bitter mill that is never still  
The day long or the night.

Yet I think God promised more than this  
When he made my soul alive,  
Than to sing my song when the task is long  
And laugh the while I strive.



# Said the Monkey to the Elephant

By T. S. Sullivant



I

Said the monkey: "Can you stand like the stork?"



II

Said the elephant: "Why, of course! It's easy."





III

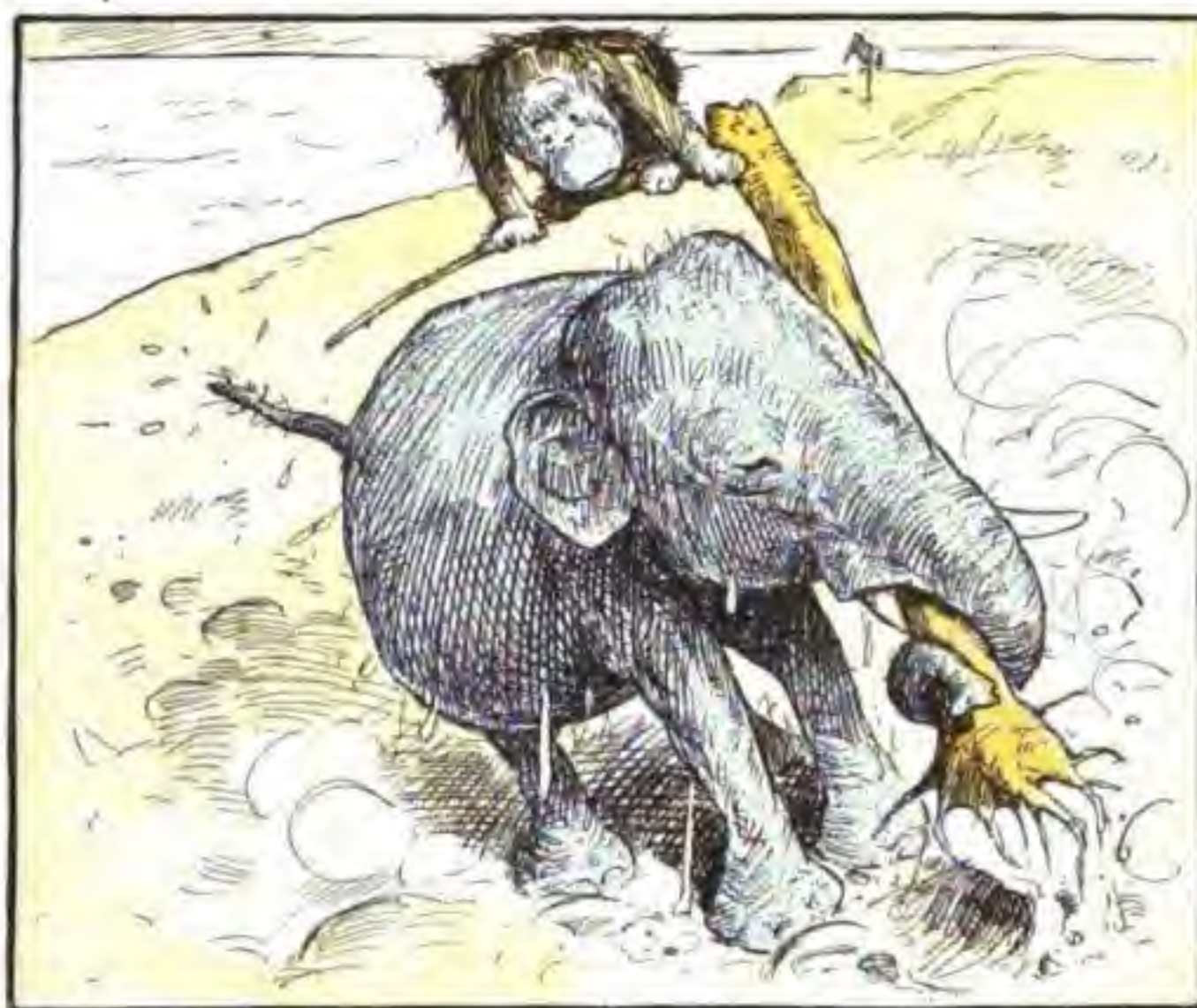
Said the monkey: "Excuse me, but I couldn't resist the temptation."



IV

Said the elephant: "Pray do not apologize. I assure you it was nothing."





V

Said the monkey: "Hey! What are you doing?"



VI

Said the elephant: "I want you to come and watch me."





VII

Said the monkey: "Help! Help!"



VIII

Said the elephant: "Tell me truly, do I not stand gracefully on one leg?"



# The Case of Horace Bliffington

By Ellis  
Parker  
Butler  
*Author of "Pigs Is Pigs"  
"That Tip" "Tooth Is Tooth"  
Etc.*

**A** LONG about the year 1902 Horace Bliffington fell into the bay and was drowned, and seven years later he was sitting in a hall bedroom on Fifty-eighth Street with a wide grin on his face and an evening paper in his hand. "Great!" he said. "Now me and Mary can get together again, and we will take the kids and scoot for the West. Ten thousand dollars! Think of that!" For seven long years he had not been able to state positively that he was dead, but now he knew he was—officially and legally dead—and he felt cheerful.

"Well," he said proudly, "I guess I'm dead all right! I rather think so!"

In 1902 Horace was very much in debt, the rent money was absent, and the annual payment on his ten-thousand-dollar policy was coming due, so he took his wife and two children sailing on the bay, and fell overboard. It was a work of art. He stood up and let the boom do it as it swung around, and he went down like a log. By the time he reached shore Mary, weeping over her fatherless children, was being rescued by a tug. The next week she put in a claim for the insurance money. Horace hoped he was dead, but the insurance company had its doubts. Mary did what she could, by means of the courts, to coax the insurance company into seeing that Horace was quite dead, but it was not until seven years had rolled away that he became legally defunct.

Horace was justly proud. He sat gloating over the small court item in the paper until the shades of night darkened the



"YOU GET OUT OF HERE!" SAID  
MR. BLIFFINGTON, TAKING A  
STEP TOWARD THE GHOST



hall bedroom, when suddenly he felt that he was not alone in the room. His hair seemed to be pulling at its roots, and a cold and clammy feeling took the place of the glow of pride. He turned his head slowly and beheld a misty stranger standing in his doorway. The stranger was slightly phosphorescent, and waned and flickered like the glow from a wet match-head when it is rubbed in the palm of the hand.

"Excuse me," he said pleasantly. "I'll get better in a few minutes. I'm not very well set yet, being so new."

"Now, look here!" said Mr. Bliffington sharply. "You get out of here! This is my room——"

"Then this is where I belong," said the stranger. "I'm your ghost, you know."

"Nonsense!" exclaimed Mr. Bliffington. "You must have made a mistake. Get out! I won't have any ghosts hanging around! You can't be my ghost because——"

He was about to say because he was not dead, but he paused, for he remembered that but a minute before he had been congratulating himself on his death. It was rather a delicate situation, and a coarse-spirited ghost might have made things very uncomfortable, but Mr. Bliffington's ghost merely smiled in a deprecatory manner.

"I had hoped," it said gently, "that we might be good friends. I trusted that you would receive me kindly, for my situation is a very difficult one. I feel that I need your help in many ways—your help and advice. I am in a most unusual situation, and it is your fault. You are only legally dead, and very few ghosts have ever been called upon to do ghostly duty in similar circumstances. In ordinary cases the rules are very simple and well defined, but I hardly know how to set about ghosting a man who is actually alive, though legally dead."

"You get out of here!" said Mr. Bliffington, arising and taking a step toward the ghost. The ghost, which had already begun to assume stronger mistiness, backed part way through the door. A look of sadness took the place of the winning smile.

"Of course, if you insist," it said regretfully. "In ordinary circumstances it would be my duty to haunt one person, and one person only—the murderer. But your case is so unusual! I thought perhaps you could advise me. But there! Never mind! I don't want to intrude where I am not wanted. Perhaps you are right. You did what you could to be

legally dead, but the judge was really the man who legally killed you. I'll go haunt him. No doubt, with his legal mind, when I explain that you are not actually dead, but only legally dead, he can——"

"You come back here!" said Mr. Bliffington energetically. "You come back and sit down!"

The ghost hesitated a moment and then oozed into the room again. It laid its ghostly hat on the folding bed and sat down in a chair. Mr. Bliffington forced himself to appear pleased. He saw that it would not do to have the ghost blabbing to the judge that Horace Bliffington was still alive, however illegally alive.

"Now, then," said Mr. Bliffington, "what is it you want to do?"

"Well," said the ghost hesitatingly, "I don't just know. I suppose I have got to haunt around—to haunt around and—I can't rattle chains, you know."

"I should hope not!" exclaimed Mr. Bliffington. "In a boarding-house?"

"No," said the ghost regretfully. "Chain-rattling wouldn't do. That is for dungeons. I am sorry, for it is great sport. Do you think I could moan a little?"

"Heavens, no!" cried Mr. Bliffington.

"Of course not!" said the ghost, as if such an idea had never occurred to it. "But I ought to do something doleful, oughtn't I?" it asked wistfully.

"No, sir!" said Mr. Bliffington positively.

The ghost's face fell. "I'm afraid I'm not going to get much fun out of it," it said sadly.

"I can't help that," said Mr. Bliffington firmly.

"I guess this isn't going to be much of a job," said the ghost, with evident dissatisfaction. "I wouldn't give two cents for it. I wish I hadn't taken it."

Mr. Bliffington smiled internally, but he did not let his face show his satisfaction. He felt that he had found the way to handle his ghost. "I'll tell you one thing," he said. "You ought to be thankful that it is any job at all. You want to remember that if it hadn't been for me you would be nowhere. And you want to remember that any time I get tired of you all I have to do is to go to the judge and show him I am alive and he'll declare that I am not even legally dead. Then where would you be?"

Of course Mr. Bliffington had not the slightest idea of going to the judge, but it served to cow the ghost.



"Now," said Mr. Bliffington, when he saw that the ghost was thoroughly frightened, "I am going out to get my dinner, and I'll leave you here, but I want you to behave. I don't want you running around the place, or kicking up any haunt racket. Just stay in the room and smile. Do you want me to bring you anything to eat?"

"No," said the ghost faintly. "Ghosts don't eat anything."

Mr. Bliffington went out and closed the door. He stood a moment in the hall, thinking, and then he opened the door again. "If you hear anyone at the door," he said to the ghost, "you get into my laundry-bag, do you hear? Get in and stay in until I tell you to come out!"

"Yes, sir," said the ghost meekly.

Mr. Bliffington dined at a small place on Columbus Avenue. He had, of course, carefully hidden his name during his period of enforced seclusion, and was known as John R. Jones to his few acquaintances among the frequenters of the restaurant. As he entered he cast his eye around, and his face lighted as he saw, sitting at one of the tables, a young man with whom he had become rather intimate. He took a seat at the same table.

"Billy," he said, "you are just the man I want to see. I need a little legal information, and you can give it to me. Of course this is confidential." Then he carefully laid before the young lawyer his whole story, ending with the question, "Now, has that ghost a right to haunt me?"

Billy considered the case silently for some time. "Yes," he said at length, "it has. A full-fledged ghost would have no rights in the premises, but a merely legal ghost is quite within its rights in haunting a legally dead

man. I don't see how you can get rid of it except by going into court and having your legal death annulled. That would annul the ghost."

"And put me in the penitentiary! No, thank you!"

"You can take your choice," said Billy, "but if you choose the ghost you want to be mighty careful. People are suspicious of ghosts nowadays. No one believes in them any more, and any man who is seen with a ghost tagging around after him is going to excite comment.

You want to keep that ghost dark."

"I wish I could," said Mr. Bliffington. "But he isn't the dark kind of ghost—he is the glowing, phosphorescent kind."

"What I meant," explained Billy, "was that you must keep him cowed and afraid of you, so that he will not venture out when you tell him to stay at home. Keep him scared to death."

When Mr. Bliffington returned to his room Billy went with him. As they entered the room total

darkness greeted them, except for a soft glow that came from the laundry-bag. Mr. Bliffington kicked the bag.

"You come out of there, and come quick!" he exclaimed peremptorily, and the ghost came out. "Mr. Wright," said Mr. Bliffington, "this is my ghost. Pretty poor specimen, isn't it?"

"Mighty poor!" said Mr. Wright. "I wouldn't have the thing around, if he was mine."

"I feel that way myself," said Mr. Bliffington. "If he doesn't mind what I tell him, and that pretty sharply, off he goes!"

"It would be easy to get rid of him," said Billy. "Just a legal form."



"I GUESS THIS ISN'T GOING TO BE MUCH OF A JOB," SAID THE GHOST, WITH EVIDENT DISSATISFACTION.

"I WISH I HADN'T TAKEN IT"





AS MARY STEPPED FORWARD WITH HER HANDS EXTENDED A GENTLE BREEZE TOUCHED HER CHEEK, AND SHE DREW BACK IN TERROR. IT MIGHT BE THE GHOST

The ghost was standing with a pained smile, rubbing its hands nervously. "Now, gentlemen," it said pleadingly, "I hope you will not be hard on me. I admit that I am inexperienced, but I am willing to learn. I only aim to please."

"Well," said Mr. Bliffington, "you had better aim to please! You take that from me! No nonsense!"

"No, sir," said the ghost meekly.

"Well, I am going out with my friend now," said Mr. Bliffington. "Get back into that laundry-bag."

The ghost oozed himself into the bag.

"That's all right," said Mr. Bliffington. "And you stay there until I come back. Understand?"

"Yes, sir," said the ghost, and when Mr. Bliffington left the room with Billy only the ghost's glowing head was visible.

If Mr. Bliffington had read the account of his legal death with a light heart, his joy was now changed to nervous worry. For seven long years he had worked at his plan. He had chosen the town in the West to which he would hasten as soon as the insurance money was paid, and he had planned the method by which he would make his existence known to his wife. The children could hardly remember him, and certainly would not, disguised as he was by a full beard and his increased baldness. But Mary had an unreasoning fear of ghosts. This had been Mr. Bliffington's one cause of uneasiness—Mary might think he was his own ghost. What she might do if she saw an actual ghost accompanying him he was afraid to consider.

When he left Billy he walked the street with bent head, considering the sad state of affairs, but he would have been still more depressed could he have known what was

happening in his hall bedroom. Hardly had he left the house when a light wagon backed up to the door and a boy entered the basement. He said a word or two to the maid that came to the door, and the maid hurried to Mr. Bliffington's room. As her hand touched the door-knob the ghost hastily drew its head into the laundry-bag, and a minute later the bag was lifted from its hook and carried downstairs and handed to the boy, who carried it to the street and threw it carelessly into the wagon.

Mr. Bliffington could come to but one conclusion. He must tell his wife, fairly and frankly, that he had a ghost, and before he returned to his room he dropped into a hotel and wrote her a short letter, briefly announcing his existence, telling of his continued love, and making an appointment for the next day. Then, as a postscript, he added these words: "I must add, dearest Mary, that I have a ghost. I trust this information will not annoy you. The ghost is well behaved and meek, and might, I think, become useful in our new home. He would at least do as a night light in a bedroom, as he gives forth a gentle glow that is easy on the eyes. I know you will like him when you see him. Until to-morrow!"

When Mr. Bliffington returned to his room he immediately noticed the absence of the laundry-bag, and he shook with fear. His first act was to rush to a telephone to demand the return of the bag, but the laundry was closed for the night. As he toiled up his stairs again a new thought came to him. As soon as the laundry discovered the ghost it would return it to him. Then he would brazenly disown it. He would say that it was no property of his, and bid them take it away. He was rather pleased with this solution, and he waited in his room until noon the



next day, but no one appeared with the ghost. He waited until within a few minutes of the time he had set to meet Mary, and was then forced to hasten not to keep her waiting.

Mary Bliffington had passed an awful forenoon. The shock of the revelation that her husband still lived was awful, but would have been a joyful shock had not the post-script about the ghost congealed her blood with terror. The mere thought of a ghost sent thrills of horror through her inmost being. There ensued a struggle between love and terror that left her weak and trembling, but in the end love won. She would take Horace back, even with his ghostly addition. At the hour set she put on her hat and went out to meet him.

The joy of Mary Bliffington as she saw Horace approach was cooled by her fear of the ghost, and Horace noticed it. The spot he had chosen was a secluded nook in Central Park, and as Mary stepped forward with her hands extended a gentle breeze touched her cheek, and she drew back in horror. The moist air thus caressing her might be the ghost! She knew that ghosts are invisible by daylight, and Horace's ghost might be anywhere. Thus the ghost, though absent, cast its saddening spell over their first meeting.

Mr. Bliffington had considered what he would say. Now that he was rid of the ghost, it was unfortunate that he had mentioned it.

"Mary," he said, when he had folded her in his arms, "I must confess! I have no ghost."

"You said you had," she said suspiciously, drawing away from him. "You wrote that you had."

"Yes," said Mr. Bliffington, forcing a smile, "I did. But it was to test your love."

"But you *said* you had a ghost," Mary insisted.

"I know it!" said Mr. Bliffington. "But I haven't. Understand?"

"I don't see why you said you had a ghost if you didn't have any," said Mary insistently. "If you did have a ghost——"

"My dear," said Mr. Bliffington, "I have told you I said so to test your love."

"If you say you have a ghost at one time,

and say you have not at another, how am I ever to know when you are telling the truth?" asked Mrs. Bliffington. "You say you are Horace Bliffington, but I saw you drown. Then you tell me you are alive and have a ghost, and just when I made myself believe it, you say the letter was part lie. How am I to know it was not all a lie?"

Mr. Bliffington was at his wits' end. He saw he had made a false start, and that he must correct his error the best he could. "Very well," he said. "And if I admit the letter was partly untrue, what then?"

"I could never believe you again," said Mrs. Bliffington positively. "And I think it would be best for us to part now, forever."

"Mary," said Mr. Bliffington frankly, "every word of that letter was true. I have a ghost."

"I will believe you," said Mrs. Bliffington simply, "when I see the ghost."

Mr. Bliffington gasped. A sudden fear that the ghost might be lost forever flashed upon his mind. He recalled the many times the laundry had lost things for him. Of course it replaced the lost articles, or paid for them, but with a lost ghost the matter would be more difficult. Mary would never be satisfied with a substitute ghost. But before he could speak Mary spoke again.

"Horace," she said, "I feel it my duty to my children and myself to let things remain

as they are until you produce the ghost. These subterfuges and lies are not like the husband I knew. I am afraid you are not yourself. I am afraid you are only your ghost."

"That I am my ghost!" cried Mr. Bliffington. "Surely, Mary, you do not believe——"

"Produce the ghost, Horace Bliffington," said Mrs. Bliffington firmly, and she turned away.

From the interview thus ended Horace

Bliffington scarcely knew how he departed. For several hours he walked the park in agony. At times he started in the direction of the laundry with long, hasty steps, fully decided to run to the blonde cashier and demand his ghost, and then, as he remembered



WITH EAGER FINGERS HE SCATTERED THE SHIRTS, THOUGH HE KNEW HE COULD NOT SEE THE GHOST IN THE GLARE OF DAY



the businesslike manner and disconcerting blue eyes of the blonde, he stopped short and turned about. There are some things a man hates to do, not the least of them being to step up to a window in a laundry and say, "When you were sorting out my socks did you run across my ghost?"

Hoping against hope, Mr. Bliffington returned to his boarding-house. Possibly the ghost had returned of its own accord. He found it had not. Two days of the utmost nervous strain passed, and on the third day the laundry-boy brought home the laundry-bag and its contents. When the maid handed it to Mr. Bliffington he could hardly wait until she had left the room to tear open the crisp paper parcel. With eager fingers he scattered the shirts and collars over his bed and opened the draw-string of the crumpled laundry-bag. He knew he could not see the ghost in the glare of day, but he put his face close to the opening of the bag.

"Are you there?" he whispered tremulously into the bag. "Ghost, are you there?" He ran his hand into the bag and clawed around in it. He took the bag by the corners and shook it, upside down. He turned the bag wrong side out. "Oh, ghost," he pleaded, "are you there?" and all the while he knew this was useless, for the ghost could not appear until the shades of night had fallen.

As the sun disappeared and darkness slowly settled over the town Mr. Bliffington sat in his room straining his eyes for the first faint phosphorescent glimmer of the ghost. From time to time he spoke gently, "Oh, ghost!" or "Say, ghost!" but he received no answer. Blackness invaded the room, but no glimmer of ghost lessened the blackness. The ghost had not come back!

All the next day Horace Bliffington spent in walking the park, forcing his mind to grapple with his problem, picking up one impossible solution after another and dropping each in disgust when it had been followed to its logically idiotic end. The most insane ideas proposed themselves—to rent a ghost, to borrow a ghost, to rig up an imitation ghost—until he wore himself out with it all, and returned to his room. The setting of the sun brought him a temporary renewal of hope, but this fled as the full darkness came, with no ghost.

The next morning Mr. Bliffington hardened his resolution and went to the laundry.

For a moment he hesitated at the door, and then he bolted in. The blue-eyed cashier glanced up carelessly as he put his face close to the little window of her tiny cage. Mr. Bliffington cleared his throat.

"Excuse me," he said, "but when the boy came for my laundry this week——"

"Shortage or damage?" asked the blonde. "Did you bring the ticket? What name?"

"A—a—shortage. Bliffington—I mean Jones, John R. Jones. I forgot the ticket," stammered Mr. Bliffington. "When the boy came for my laundry——"

"Yes?" said the cashier without interest. "What's short?"

Mr. Bliffington blushed. "My ghost," he said hesitatingly. But if he expected the cashier to laugh in his face he was making a mistake. Her mouth hardened, and she looked at him superciliously.

"If there was anything short," she said coldly, "say so. The boss don't allow none of the girls to flirt with customers, so it ain't no use trying, and I guess I think too much of myself to flirt with every feller that wants to. So if you had anything short say so, Mister Smarty. It ain't no use trying to flirt."

"Well, you see," said Mr. Bliffington uneasily, "I am compelled—that is to say, if you will just listen to me while I explain. My ghost was in the laundry-bag——"

The cashier turned her head and called in a shrill voice: "Mister Wiggis, could you step here a minute? They's a guy here that's crazy. I wisht you would come and throw him out."

She did not seem to be greatly excited about it, however, nor to be greatly frightened. Even while she appealed for aid she was carefully gathering up a few back hairs and tucking their ends in among the evidently false curls.

Mr. Wiggis came forward with a frown of annoyance at being disturbed. He laid a hand on Mr. Bliffington's shoulder, and spoke insinuatingly. "All right, my good man," he said, "but we are very busy to-day. Run along now, that's a good fellow, and come back some other time. Come back about eight o'clock this evening, and we'll talk it all over. It will be all right."

But Mr. Bliffington did not move. "I want to explain," he said.

"That's all right," said Mr. Wiggis soothingly. "There's no need to explain; we understand all about it. Just run along now,



and come back at—come back to-morrow, or the next day. Good-by."

"Look here," said Mr. Bliffington with sudden anger, "you can't get rid of me that way. If a man who has sent his laundry here for the last seven years, and who has paid cash, can't make a decent claim for shortage——"

"Well, why didn't you say so?" exclaimed Mr. Wiggis. "We'll fix that up in a minute. Shortages will happen sometimes in the best regulated laundries. Now what was short?"

Although Mr. Bliffington again blushed he gazed at Mr. Wiggis with a dog-like appeal in his eyes. "My ghost," he said hesitatingly. "I had my ghost in the laundry-bag——"

"What'd I tell you?" said the cashier. "Crazy as——"

"Now you just shut up," said Mr. Wiggis shortly. "I guess I can handle this case myself." The cashier assumed a look of haughty disdain, and Mr. Wiggis turned to Mr. Bliffington. "One ghost short?" he asked. "We will look it up."

Of course things will get lost once in a while—get into the wrong package."

Mr. Bliffington hesitated. "If you would make a special effort," he suggested.

"We will," said the laundryman. "If that ghost is anywhere about the place we will find it, depend on that."

Mr. Bliffington was hardly out of sound of the laundry when yells of mirth overpowered the noise of the electric mangles and steam-washing-machines, as Mr. Wiggis told the

girls the story of the interview. A joke is welcome even in the superheated atmosphere of a laundry, but in a few minutes the levity was quelled, for it was the busy season, and there was no time to waste.

That night the laundry worked overtime, but at nine o'clock there was a temporary cessation of labor. The feed-wire of the mangles short-circuited the electric-light wire, and burned out the fuses, and in the absolute darkness that ensued a dull phosphorescent glow shone in the tub-room.

Caught in the cogs of one of the washing-machines and wrapped around and around the shaft was Mr. Bliffington's ghost! It was in a pitiable condition. Undoubtedly it had been dumped into the washing-machine with the contents of the laundry-bag, and had been steam-washed with the collars and white goods. The boiling water and strong lye-and-soap cleanser had done it no good at all. The whirling prongs of the washer had not improved it in



THE CASHIER TURNED AND CALLED IN A SHRILL VOICE:  
"MR. WIGGIS, THEY'S A GUY HERE THAT'S CRAZY.  
I WISHT YOU WOULD COME AND  
THROW HIM OUT"

the least. Torn and twisted, and washed pale and thin, it had evidently sought the first chance of escape and crawled from the washing-machine only to fall into the cog-wheel! For days it had whirled around and around with the whirling shaft, and now it barely palpitated with a faint, dull glow. Patrick Dooley, in charge of the washing-machines, examined it carefully for some time before he was even aware that it was a ghost, and had he not heard of





MR. WIGGIS CAREFULLY UNWOUND THE GHOST UNTIL IT HUNG LIMP BY ONE ARM THAT WAS CAUGHT IN THE COGS

Mr. Bliffington's application he might never have known that it was a ghost. He stumbled up the dark stairway and found Mr. Wiggis at the telephone, shouting for electricians.

"Say," said Dooley, "that there ghost is down there in th' wash-room. Have ye got a collar-box or a paper bag Oi cud put it into?"

Several of the flat-iron girls screamed, but Mr. Wiggis followed Mr. Dooley down the stairs.

"Pat," he said, when he had examined the ghost carefully, "the only way we can get that ghost loose is to run the washing-machine backward to unwind it off the shaft, and then take off that cog-wheel. It looks to me like that was a pretty badly damaged ghost, but it's not our fault."

Mr. Dooley put his strong arms to the washing-machine and slowly turned its wheels backward, while Mr. Wiggis carefully unwound the ghost until it hung limp by one arm that was caught in the cogs. Then the cog-wheel was taken off the shaft, and the ghost fell in a pale heap on the floor. Mr. Dooley shook his head.

"That's a mighty near gone ghost!" he

said, and he was right. But Mr. Wiggis had no time to waste. He swept the little pile of ghost onto a piece of paper, and carried it up-stairs.

"Here, Maggie," he said, "starch this up a little, and when she's done it, you iron it out, Kate."

The girls gathered around the poor ghost and examined it with interest. Few of them had ever seen a ghost, if any of them ever had, but this one was not now in a condition to cause fright. When it had been starched and ironed it was so faint that it could hardly be seen. It was merely the faintest possible glow, now showing in one spot and now in another, on the ironing-board. Mr. Wiggis looked at it and shook his head. At that instant the electric bulbs burst into light, and the ghost disappeared entirely. Mr. Wiggis had to turn out the lights in order that he might see enough of the ghost to wrap it in paper. Then he turned on the lights and the blonde cashier made out a laundry-ticket for it, and put the package on the shelf to be delivered in the morning.

When Mr. Bliffington received the parcel the next morning his heart beat tumultuously



with joy, and he hastily tore open the paper. Nothing rewarded his gaze. He closed the blinds and hung a sheet and a blanket before the window, but even in the room thus darkened he could see no trace of the ghost, and he set himself to await the coming of night. He wrote a joyous letter to Mrs. Bliffington, making an appointment for that evening, and sent it by special messenger. As night fell he became more and more nervous, and when utter darkness filled the room he was just able to distinguish the very faint glow of the ghost, a mere point of phosphorus no bigger than the end of a match on the sheet of manila wrapping-paper. As he gazed at it, wondering how he could persuade his wife that this was indeed a ghost, a tap on the door aroused him and the maid handed him an envelope. The note it contained said:

DEAR HORACE:

I have been thinking. Bring the ghost. All will then be well.

MARY.

As he finished reading the note he glanced at the ghost, just in time to see it give a last faint flicker and flicker out. For a minute he stood silent, lost in conflicting emotions.

"Now, I call that odd!" he said at length. "I never knew a ghost to act that way. I never heard of a ghost like that. As a matter of fact I wouldn't give two cents to be haunted by a ghost like that, coming and going in an irresponsible manner. I like a reliable ghost. Tut! And he called himself a legal ghost! Established by law! I'll never believe a ghost again!"

The door opened and Billy Wright entered. "Hello, dead man!" he said jovially. "Ghostie and you having a little chat?"

"The ghost is gone," said Mr. Bliffington in a hollow tone.

"That's so, of course," said Billy Wright.

"I should have known he would be gone, seeing that you have a temporary renewal of life."

"What!" cried Mr. Bliffington.

"Didn't you know? Insurance company has appealed—carried the case to a higher court. You are legally alive again for a while. So, of course, no ghost. I congratulate you."

Mr. Bliffington only groaned.

"Oh, if you feel that way about it," said Billy Wright, "you may as well cheer up, for I can tell you the insurance company will lose again. You'll soon be dead again. Your ghost will come back."

Again Mr. Bliffington groaned, perhaps more mournfully than before. He knew what his wife would say if he appeared that evening without the ghost. A week later, a year later, the ghost would be but a worry and a nuisance. Much as he had longed for a ghost twelve hours earlier he now thought of the ghost with repugnance. He turned to his dresser and took his tooth-brush from the tumbler in which it stood, brush end up. He jerked his suit-case from the corner, and opening it, cast the tooth-brush into it.

"Billy," he said, "I am going away. You know I am Horace Bliffington, and that I am alive. You can be additional evidence before the higher court. I'm not going to be dead any more. If I had been furnished with a reliable, dependable ghost it might be different, but I'm going to give that phosphorescent fizzle a surprise. He evaporated on me when I needed him most, and he can stay evaporated. If anybody asks you, just say I don't believe in ghosts; I've had one too many of my own."

It is indeed true that in this world the evil actions of a man are followed by their own harsh retribution.







# TALES OF THE ISLANDERS

BY CHARLOTTE  
BRONTË

DRAWINGS BY BLANCHE GREER



*THE Cosmopolitan here prints for the first time an early story by Charlotte Brontë, that novelist of noble genius and heroic instinct, whose work seems to spring from the cosmic emotional energy. Living secluded on a lonely moor, orphaned of their mother and in awe of their strange father, the Brontë children (Charlotte, Emily, Anne, and Branwell), robbed of so much outer joy, turned to*

*reading and writing and so took refuge in the delights of the imagination. Far from the dreary old parsonage, their "Isle of Dream" rises with palace and park and hall and garden, all beautiful with every gift of art and nature that the poetic heart of a child could devise. In that free realm, the country parson's repressed little children are the directors and dictators of the fortunes of great and small. There they lead in adventures and vicissitudes, in rescues and redemptions.*

*All this is gathered from "Tales of the Islanders," written by Charlotte at thirteen, in a manuscript of microscopic script, containing some forty thousand words. This unpublished story the Cosmopolitan has purchased, but the limitations of space allow only excerpts from this remarkable romance. I cull enough, however, to show the setting and the general action, and to indicate the imaginative power, the wit, the learning, the ease, and the vividness of description of this untrained girl of the English moors.*

*Note the splendors and the terrors of the palace on the Isle of Dream, the soaring towers and the dark dungeons. Note the vivid touch that flashes the surroundings and the characters before us—the homely parsonage kitchen with its austere privations, the lordly pleasure-garden of the isle with its Arabian and Arcadian grounds and verdure. Observe, too, the details of Wellington's business place, of his housekeeper's room, and of his wife's boudoir. How well defined and well imagined!*





*Observe again the vignette of the autumn evening with the snails under the hedge, and then the larger sweep of the countryside in a half dozen lines that give us England's typical landscape. How artistic and discriminating the child's eye, prophetic of the greater woman to come!*

*In rounding out character, too, there is the same grasp of reality, unity built from swift detail. The complacency and magnanimity of the "king and queens" (the four little Brontës, of course) in rescuing the Wellingtons from danger is vastly different from the elfish and perverse attitude of this tricky four masquerading in the last scene to bewitch and bewilder the young Wellesley. But always the characters are dramatically consistent.*

*This little Brontë story curiously reflects the habit of mind of the generation which explained events by magic rather than by science. I have read it a dozen times, and always with new pleasure at the hints of dawning genius apparent on every page.*

EDWIN MARKHAM.

## 1. Wellington and the Isle of Dream

THE play of the Islanders was formed in December, 1827, in the following manner. One night, about the time when the cold sleet and stormy fogs of November are succeeded by the snow-storms and high piercing night winds of confirmed winter, we were all sitting round the warm blazing kitchen fire, having just concluded a quarrel with Tabby concerning the propriety of lighting a candle, from which she came off victorious, no candle having been produced. A long pause succeeded, which was at last broken by Branwell saying, in a lazy manner, "I don't know what to do." This was echoed by Emily and Anne.

Tabby—"Wha, ya may go to bed."

Branwell—"I'd rather do anything than that."

Charlotte—"Why are you so glum to-night, Tabby? Oh! suppose we had each an island of our own."

Branwell—"If we had I would choose the Isle of Man."

Charlotte—"And I would choose the Isle of Wight."

Emily—"The Isle of Arran for me."

Anne—"And mine should be Guernsey."

We then chose who would be chief men in our islands. Branwell chose John Bull, Ashley Cooper, and Leigh Hunt; Emily, Walter Scott, Mr. Lockhart, and Johnny Lockhart; Anne, Michael Sadler, Lord Bentinck, and Sir Henry Halford; I chose the Duke of Wellington and his two sons, Christopher North & Company, and Mr. Abernethy. Here our conversation was interrupted by the, to us, dismal sound of the clock striking seven, and we were summoned off to bed. The next day we added many others to our list of men, till we got almost all the chief men of the kingdom.

After this, for a long time, nothing worth noticing occurred.

In June, 1828, we erected a school on a fictitious island, the Island of Dream, which was to contain one thousand children. The island was fifty miles in circumference, and certainly appeared more like the work of enchantment and beautiful fiction than sober reality. In some parts, made terribly sublime by mighty rocks, rushing streams, and roaring cataracts, stood trees scathed by lightning or withered by time. In other parts of this island were greenswards and glittering fountains springing in the flowery meadows or among the pleasant woods where fairies were said to dwell.

A clear lake, whose borders were overhung by the drooping willow, the elegant larch, the venerable oak, and the evergreen laurel, seemed a crystal emerald, a framed mirror of some huge giant. It is said of one of the most beautiful lakes that, when all is quiet, the music of fairy-land may be heard and that a tiny barge of red sandalwood (its sails and cordage of silk and yards of fine ivory) may be seen to shimmer across the lake; and when its small crew have gathered the water-lily, it floats back again, and, landing on the flowery bank, the fairies spread their transparent wings. They melt away at the sound of mortal footsteps like the mists of the morning at the splendor of the sun.

From beautiful wild roses and trailing woodbine towers a magnificent palace of pure white marble whose finely wrought pillars and majestic turrets seem the work of mighty genii and not of feeble man. Ascending a flight of marble steps, you come to a grand entrance which leads into a hall surrounded by Corinthian pillars of white



marble. In the midst of the hall is a colossal statue holding in each hand a vase of crystal from which rushes a stream of clear water, which, breaking into a thousand diamonds and pearls, falls into a basin of pure gold. Finally disappearing through an opening, it rises again in different parts of the park in the form of brilliant fountains, these falling back into immense rills, which, winding through the ground, throw themselves into rivers which run into the sea.

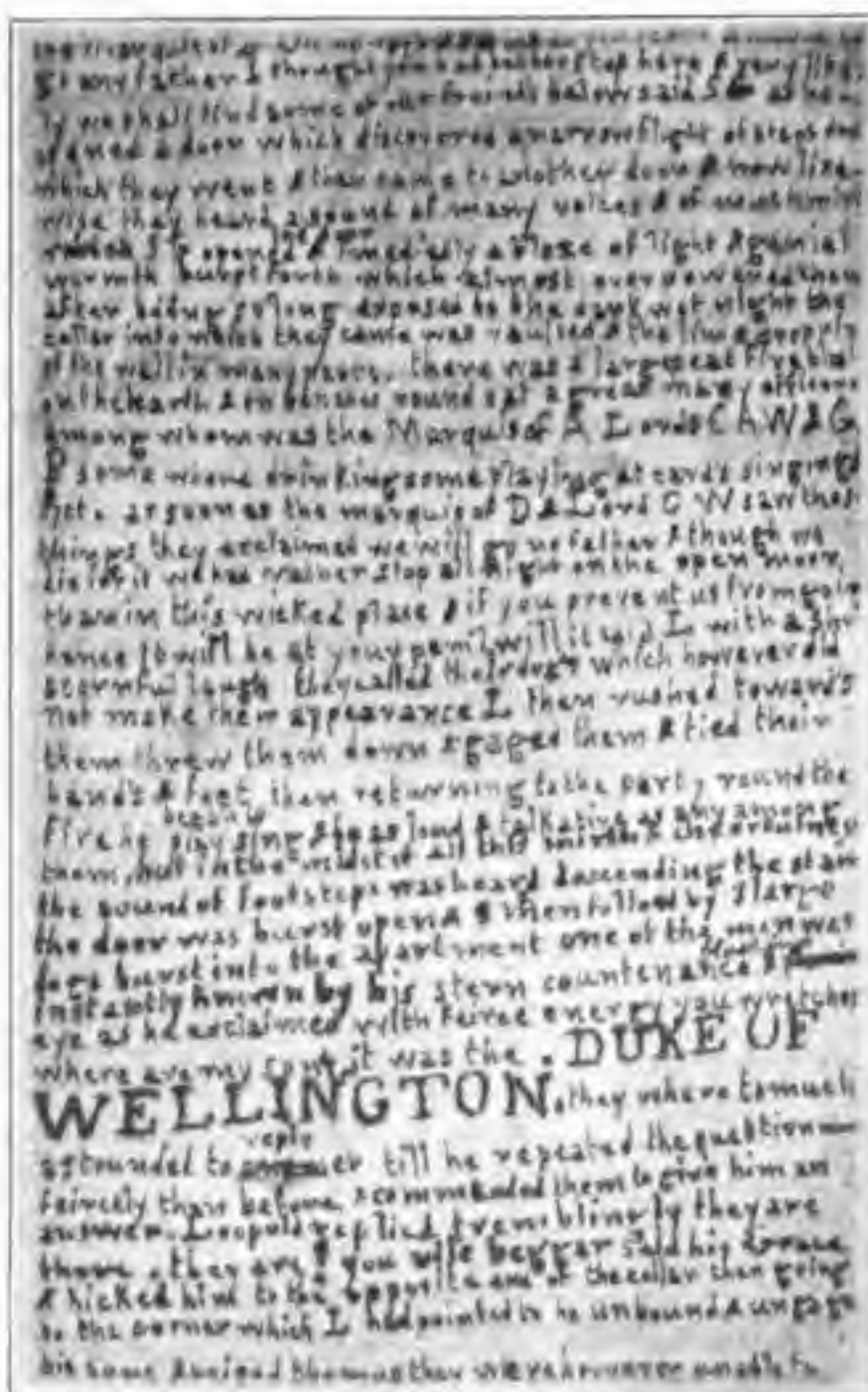
At the upper end of the hall is a grove of orange-trees bearing the golden fruit and fragrant blossoms often upon the same branch. From this hall you pass on to another splendid, spacious apartment all hung with rich deep-crimson velvet; and from the grand dome is suspended a magnificent luster of fine gold, the drops of which are pure crystal. The whole length of the room run large sofas covered also with crimson velvet. At each end are chimneypieces of dove-colored Italian marble, the pillars of which are of the Corinthian order, fluted and wreathed with gold.

In the hall of the fountain, behind a statue, is a small door over which is drawn a curtain of white silk. This door when opened discovers a small apartment, at the farther end of which is a very large iron door to a long dark passage. At the end is a flight of steps leading to a subterranean dungeon, a wide vault dimly lighted by a lamp which casts a death-like melancholy luster over a part of the dungeon, leaving the rest in the gloomy darkness of midnight. In the middle is a slab of black marble supported by four

pillars. At the end of it stands a throne of iron. In several parts of the vault are instruments of torture.

At the end of this dungeon are the cells which are appropriated to the private and particular use of naughty children. These cells are darkly vaulted and so far down in the earth that the loudest shriek could not be heard by any inhabitant of the upper world. In these, as well as in the dungeon, the most unjust torturing might go on without any fear of detection, if it were not that I keep the key of the dungeon and Emily keeps the key of the cells and of the huge iron entrance, which will brave any assault except with the lawful instrument.

The children who inhabit this magnificent palace are composed only of the young nobles of the land. The chief governor is the Duke of Wellington. "Little king and queens" are our titles. The guards for keeping the children in order and taking them out to walk are the Marquis of Douro and Lord Charles Wellesley (Wellington's sons), a task for which they are



Facsimile of a page of the original manuscript of "Tales of the Islanders." The story, comprising four little manuscript books, was entirely written on sheets this size and smaller

peculiarly fitted, as they lead them into the wildest and most dangerous parts of the country, leaping rocks, precipices, chasms, etc., little caring whether the children go before or stop behind; and finally coming home with about a dozen wanting, who are found a few days after in hedges or ditches with legs or heads broken, this affording a fine field for Sir A. Hume, Sir A. Cooper, and Sir H. Halford to display their different modes of setting and trepanning.



There are guards for thrashing the children when they need it. And I forgot to mention that Branwell has a large black club with which he thumps the children upon occasions, and that most unmercifully.

For some time after the school was established, the institution went on very well. All the rules were observed with scrupulous exactness, the governors attended admirably to their duty, the children were becoming something like civilized beings, to all outward appearance at least; gambling was less frequent among them, their quarrels with one another were less savage, and some little attention was paid by themselves to order and cleanliness. At this institution we constantly resided in the magnificent palace of the school, as did all the governors, so that nothing was left entirely to the care of servants and underlings. The great room had become the resort of all the great ministers in their hours of leisure, for, seeing how well things were conducted, they resolved to uphold the institution with all their might.

This prosperous state of affairs continued for about six months. Then the duke was obliged to be constantly in London, and we soon took ourselves off to the same place, and the whole management of the school was left to the Marquis of Douro and Lord Charles Wellesley.

For some time we heard not a word about the school and never took the trouble to inquire, until at length one morning, as we were sitting at breakfast, in came a letter; and when we had opened it we perceived it was from Lord Wellesley. The purport was as follows:

June 8, 1830, Vision Island.

LITTLE KING AND QUEENS:

I write this letter to inform you of a rebellion which has broken out in the school. I am at present in a little hut built in the open air . . . but they are coming and I can say no more.

Yours, etc.,

CHARLES IV.

P. S.: Since I wrote the above we have had a battle in which our bloodhounds fought bravely, and we have conquered. We are, however, reduced to a great extremity for want of food; so if you don't make haste and come to our help, we must surrender. Bring my father's great bloodhound with you.

As soon as we had read this letter we ordered a balloon, which we got into and then steered our way through the air toward Strathfieldsay. We alighted in the grounds about the school; and on casting our eyes toward the myrtle-grove we saw the stately palace rising in its magnificence

from out green trees, which grew in silent grandeur over that isle which is rightly named "Dream," for never but in the visions of night has the eye of man beheld such gorgeous beauty, such wild magnificence, as in this fairy land; and never but in the imaginings of his heart has his ear heard such music as that which proceeds from the giant's harp, hid from sight amid those trees.

After we had been in the island about half an hour, we saw Lord Wellesley approaching at a distance. When he came near he accosted us with: "Well, Little Queens, I am glad you are come. Make haste and follow me, for there is not a moment to be lost."

No sound but the echo of a distant cannon, which was discharged as we entered the glen, and the scream of the eagle startled from her ærie disturbed the death-like silence. In a short time we came to the place where the rebel children were encamped. The hut of the Marquis of Douro and Lord Wellesley was built beneath the shade of a spreading oak. When we had entered the humble abode, we beheld the Marquis of Douro lying on a bed of leaves. His face was very pale, and his fine features seemed as fixed as a marble statue. His eyes were closed, and his glossy curling hair was in some parts stiffened with blood. As soon as we beheld this sight, Charles rushed forward and, falling on the bed beside his brother, fainted away. The usual remedies were then applied to him by Doctor Hume, and after a long time he recovered. All this time Arthur had neither spoken nor stirred, and we thought he was dead. In this emergency we thought it advisable to send at once for the Duke of Wellington.

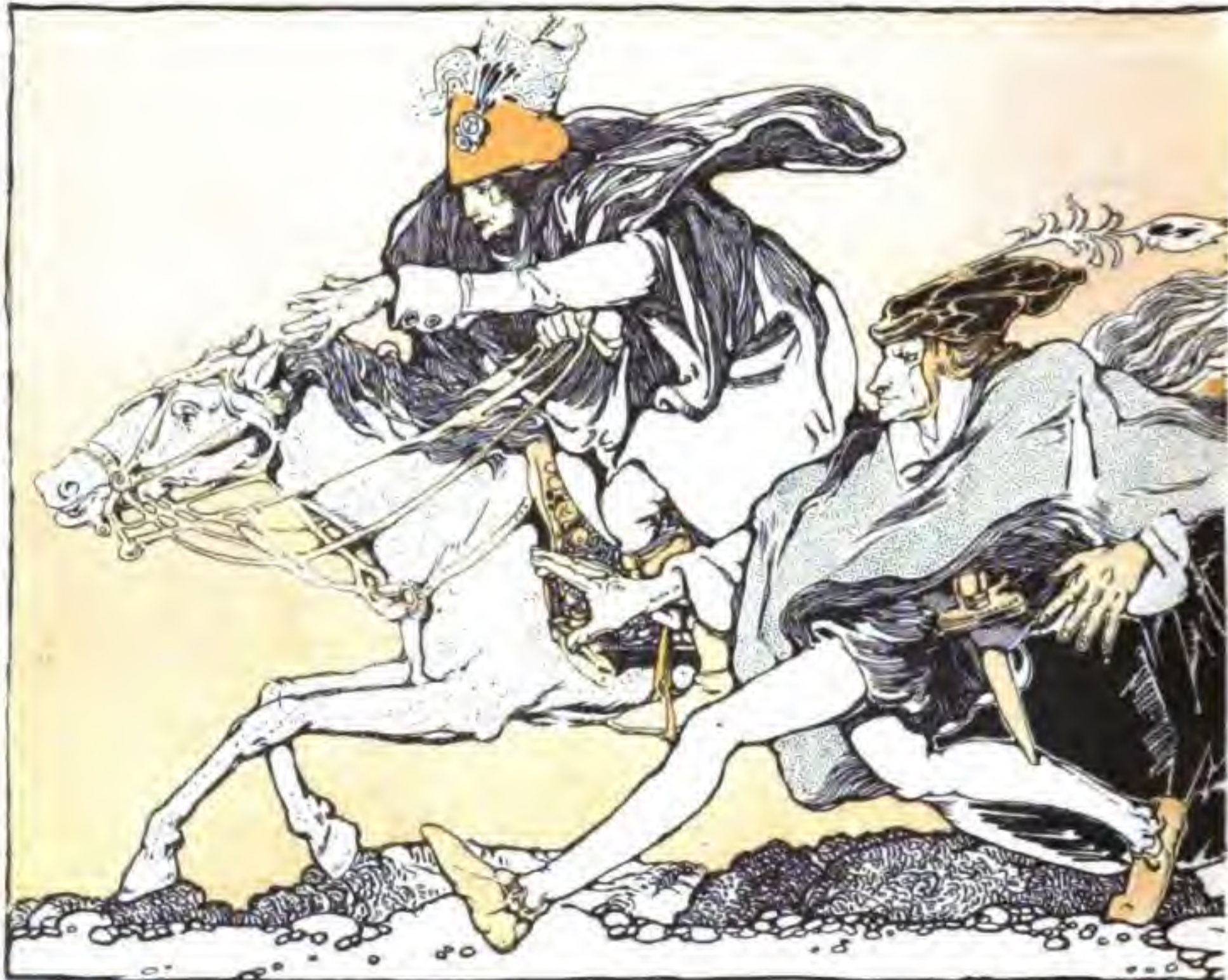
When we informed the duke of what had happened, he became as pale as death, his lips quivered, and his whole frame shook with agitation. In a short time he arrived at the hut, and then, going up to the bedside, he took hold of one lifeless hand and said in a tremulous and scarcely audible voice, "Arthur, my son, speak to me." At the sound of his father's words, Arthur slowly opened his eyes and looked up. He tried to speak, but could not. We then in the plenitude of our goodness and kindness of heart cured him instantly by the application of some fairy remedies, and as soon as we had done so the duke drew from his finger a diamond ring and presented it to us.





When then in the plenitude of our goodness and kindness of heart cured him instantly by the application of some fairy remedies





n a few moments they were ready...

After these transactions we informed his grace of the school rebellion. He immediately went out without speaking a word, and we followed him. He proceeded up to the place where they were encamped and called out in a loud tone of voice that if they did not surrender they were all dead men, as he had brought several thousand bloodhounds

with him who would tear them to pieces in a moment. This they dreaded more than anything and therefore agreed to surrender, which they did immediately, and for a short time thereafter the school prospered as before. But we, becoming tired of it, sent the children to their own homes, and now only fairies dwell in the Island of Dream.

## 2. The Fairies Abduct Wellington's Son

ONE evening the Duke of Wellington was writing in his room at Downing Street, London, reposing at his ease in an ample easy chair, smoking a homely tobacco pipe (for he disdained all the modern frippery of cigars) beside a blazing fire. One-armed Hardinge stood at his desk awkwardly scrawling an army estimate on

a gilt-edged sheet of Bath post. Coxcombical Roslyn banged against the polished green marble mantelpiece, eying with ineffable contempt the quizzical old pekin who sat opposite and occasionally casting a sidelong glance at his own dandy figure reflected in a magnificent mirror suspended against the wall which was hung with purple





..They continued until evening..

figured velvet. Castlereagh, seated on a Turkish ottoman, whined and yawned incessantly, while Mr. Secretary Peel, perched upon a treasury tripod close beside his grace, kept whispering and wheedling in the duke's ear.

While they were thus employed a heavy footstep was heard without. The door opened, and a little shrunk old woman, wrapped up and wholly concealed, except her face, entered. Her appearance excited no surprise, for this was one of the famous little queens. She advanced up to the duke and presented him a letter written with blood and sealed with a seal. He took it respectfully and read it. While he was doing this, he changed color several times, evincing uncontrollable emotion. His grace immediately rang a bell, ordered the swiftest horse in his stables, and, clad in a

Georgian mantle with a broad military belt, brass helmet, and high black plume, mounted the spirited animal and spurred him to full gallop.

He rode with such great speed that when the sun rose he beheld the towers of Strathfieldsay rearing their proud heads, ruddy with the first beams of the morning. From the ancient oak forests which surrounded them all his wide domains were stretched before his eyes—the peaceful village nestling among venerable woods, the wide fruitful fields extending to the verge of the horizon, the stately trees darkening the scene with their shadow, the white cottages looking out from their bowery retreats, the orchards and the great river refreshing all as it passed. All were his own, won by his invincible sword, the monuments of England's gratitude to her glorious preserver.



He heard a light buoyant step and a sweet voice at a distance caroling the following words:

Oh, where has Arthur been this night?  
 Why did he not come home?  
 For long the sun's fair orb of light  
 Hath shone in heaven's dome.  
 Beneath the greenwood tree he slept;  
 His tester was the sky.  
 O'er him the midnight stars have wept  
 Bright dewdrops from on high.  
 And when the first bright streak of day  
 Did in the east appear  
 His eye touched by the morning's ray  
 Shone out with luster clear.  
 He rose and from his dark brown hair  
 He shook the glittering gems,  
 Which nature's hand had scattered there  
 As on the forest stems.  
 The flowers sent up an odor sweet  
 As forth he stately stept;  
 The stag sprang past more light and fleet.  
 The hare through brushwood crept—

Here the voice suddenly stopped; and his grace stepped forward and called, "Good morning, my son, where are you going?"

"Oh, dear, dear father," exclaimed he, "I am so glad to see you! I am going to seek Arthur, who has never been home since last evening."

"It is true then that they have not deceived me," said the duke, and the dark sorrowful cloud which for a moment had been dissipated by the presence of his cheerful son shadowed his noble brow more gloomily than before. "Charles, your brother is in danger of death," he said solemnly.

"In danger of death," repeated Charles, and immediately all gladness forsook his face.

By this time Seringapatan, hearing the moans and sobs of Lord Wellesley, had come out of his house.

"Seringapatan," said his grace, "I believe you to be an honorable and upright man, faithful to my interests and grateful for the favors I have done you; therefore I will trust you with a secret of great importance. Last night I received a mysterious letter purporting to be from the spirit of my dead father. It stated that Arthur, the eldest of my children and your future lord, having in the course of his melancholy wanderings been drawn by the power of a secret fascination into the abode of supernatural beings, is at this moment suffering all the torment which they can devise, and if you did not go with me to a particular place a certain death will befall him. I now require you by your allegiance to me and mine to obey my commands in everything."

Here the duke stopped, and Seringapatan, falling on his knees, solemnly promised to follow all his grace's orders until he should draw his last breath.

The duke then turned to Charles and asked if he would go also.

"I would willingly die to save Arthur's life," replied the young lord ardently.

In a few moments they were ready. They continued until evening, when they arrived at a place where were huge rocks rising perpendicularly to an immense height. A vast cataract rolling thunderously down the precipice hollowed for itself a basin in the solid stone beneath. The water dashed furiously onward. They proceeded to mount the narrow, rugged, steep path till they came to another plateau, above which the rocks, rising to a dizzy height, appeared wholly inaccessible. Here the duke suddenly stopped and commanded Seringapatan and Lord Wellesley to halt, as it was not necessary for them to proceed farther. They watched him with earnest eyes, for they saw it was impossible for any mortal man unassisted by supernatural power to scale the perpendicular wall. About five yards distant from the plateau was a projecting fragment of rock that hung over the valley beneath.

The duke stood for a moment gazing eagerly around as if searching for some means to attain his ends. At length, fixing his eyes on the fragment, he quickly threw off his dark mantle and, advancing to the border of the plateau, sprang from it to the ledge as if the spirit of an izard or a chamois had been suddenly granted him.

When Lord Wellesley saw his father perform this daring act a smothered scream burst from his lips. The duke turned round, notwithstanding his perilous situation, and, looking at his son with compassion, he said: "My dear Charles, do not fear for me. I shall return with Arthur perfectly safe and well." Then, turning a corner of the rock, he disappeared from their sight. Continuing on his course, which became more dangerous at every step, he arrived at a vast cavern closed with iron doors. These rolled back and admitted him into an immense hall of stone. The door closed after him, and he found himself in this strange apartment dimly lighted by a blue flame. In the middle huge, massive pillars rose to the vaulted roof. Their capitals were ornamented with human skulls and cross-bones,





hey, however, to his utmost astonishment, glided noiselessly into the midst of the river. . .

their shafts were in the form of human skeletons, and their bases were shaped like tombstones. The hall was so long that he was unable to see the end, and he heard the echoing of his footsteps at a distance as if the sound was reflected by vaults or cells. After a considerable time the noise of an opening door was heard, and light, well-known footsteps fell on his ears; and in another moment he embraced his beloved son.

Almost at the same instant they found themselves on the plateau where Seringapatana and Lord Wellesley anxiously awaited them. After a short time spent in tears of affection and congratulation the whole party returned in safety to Strathfieldsay. At all the questions put to the marquis respecting his sufferings while in that cave, his invariable answer has been that they were indescribable.

### 3. Wellington's Son Tricked by the Fairies

ONE fine autumnal evening the Duke of Wellington was on his way from London to Strathfieldsay. He had just passed through the village and had entered a narrow bridle-path leading to the park gate. The sun was just set, and the snails were crawling forth from the hedge-side to enjoy that refreshing dampness which immediately precedes dusk at this period of the year. Scarcely a leaf fell from the oaks and hawthorns bordering the path, for the dark hue of their foliage had hardly begun to

mellow with the waning season. The only sounds audible were the noise of an occasional lady-clock humming by and the trickle of a rill as it flowed invisibly down ancient cart-ruts hid by wild grass and other hedge plants with which the road was completely overgrown. A hill rising on one hand concealed from view the hall with its parks, situated in a broad delightful valley sloping far down on the other side.

As the duke walked quietly forward he suddenly heard a murmuring sound like the



voices of several people conversing in an undertone. At a few paces farther on, a turn in the path brought him in sight of the figures of three old women seated on a green bank under a holly, knitting with the utmost rapidity and keeping their tongues in motion all the while. Stretched in a lounging position beside them, lay Little King gathering violets. At the duke's approach he started up, as likewise did the old women. They courtesied, and he bowed much after the fashion of a dip-tailor's stone. He then, after a sharp peal of laughter from his companions, addressed the duke thus:

"Well, Duke of Wellington, here are three friends of mine whom I wish to introduce to you. They have lived for some time as washerwomen in the family of the late Sir Robert Peel, Bart., who respected them so much that in his will he remembered them each for twenty guineas. After his death, however, the present baronet turned them away to make room for the modern trash of foppish varlets that now constitute every gentleman's establishment. They are now cast on the wide world without shelter or home; and if you would consent to take them into your service it would be conferring a great obligation on me as well as on them."

"I am not much accustomed to engage servants," replied his grace, "but you may take them to my housekeeper, and if their characters will bear the old lady's scrutiny I have no objection."

"Very well, Duke of Wellington," replied Little King.

The duke then remounted his horse and proceeded at a small trot, wishing to escape from the company of his new acquaintances. They, however, stuck close to him, talking and laughing and trying to draw him into conversation. In a short time they turned the hill, and going rapidly down a long inclined lane entered the vast wood which forms a boundary to one side of Strathfieldsay Park.

After threading the puzzled mazes of the labyrinth which leads to Seringapatan's cottage they stopped at the door. Seringapatan instantly sprang out and flung open the park gate. His grace then bent aside and whispered in the old man's ear, commanding him to detain Little King and his comrades until he reached the hall. Seringapatan bowed again, lower than before, and the duke, tickling Blanco's flanks, galloped swiftly off.

"If you please, will you step into my kitchen and rest you?" said Seringapatan.

They thanked him and without further ceremony walked in. It was a small apartment neatly whitewashed. An oaken dresser furnished with the brightest pewter and delft ware covered one end. Above it was suspended a highly polished musket and sword; several ancient books were carefully piled on a black oak chest. Two substantial armchairs stood at each end of a hot blazing fire, and opposite the window-seat a number of stout three-legged stools were ranged in a row. The floor and hearth were as clean and white as scouring could make them. Mrs. Seringapatan sat mending her husband's stockings by a round deal table. She was clad in a dark-green stuff gown with snow-white cap and apron, and looked as sedate as if she had been sixty instead of twenty-five.

When Little King and the old women entered she rose and begged them to be seated. After chatting a while, she got up and went out, but in a short time returned with a plate of rich currant cake and a bottle of dainties. She then invited her friends to partake.

Seringapatan, knowing that by this time his master had arrived at his destination, opened the door and permitted them to go. They pursued their way up the park without stopping, for the night was fast coming on.

It happened that Lord Charles Wellesley had that day been taking one of his wild rambles over his father's domains and was now returning homeward. At a distance he saw the three old women with their conductor, and he determined to walk close behind and remain a concealed listener, promising himself much amusement from the scheme. In this, however, he was deceived; for, as voluble as they had been while in Seringapatan's cottage, they now became perfectly silent. In about a quarter of an hour they reached the deep rapid stream which runs through the grounds. They, however, to his utmost astonishment, glided noiselessly into the midst of the river and there, turning three times around amid the shivered fragments of brilliant light in which the moon was reflected, were swallowed up in a whirlpool of raging surges and foam.

He stood a moment powerless with horror, then, springing over the mound, dashed through the trees on the other side, and gaining the open path beheld Little King and



the old women walking whole and sound a few yards before him. More surprised than before, he viewed them in silence for an instant and then concluded that they were fairies whom Little King had brought with him to earth. He strove to satisfy himself with this conjecture; but, notwithstanding his endeavors, he still felt an uneasy, vague, and by no means pleasant sensation when he looked at their little sharp faces and heard the shrill disagreeable tones of their voices.

Next morning at nine Mrs. Douro sent word that she was ready to receive them. On proceeding to her apartment they found her seated at breakfast in an armchair with her feet on a cushioned foot-stool. Her figure was invested in an old-fashioned black silk gown with a cap and ruff starched to the consistency of buckram. She happened this

morning to be in a good temper, so after bidding them sit down and asking a few questions, she agreed to take them before her lady, the Duchess of Wellington.

When they had passed through a long corridor gallery and antechamber, they came to her private sitting-room. It was ornamented after a most splendid but, nevertheless, simple and unostentatious style. The duchess was engaged at her usual charitable employment of working for the poor. She was attired in a rich robe of crimson velvet almost entirely unadorned except for one bright diamond which fastened the belt. The redundant tresses of her hair were confined in a silken net over which gracefully waved a single white ostrich feather. Her face and figure were extremely beautiful, and her large hazel eyes beamed



he duchess was engaged at her usual charitable employment of working for the poor.



with expression. But the principal charm about her was the gentleness and sweetness of her countenance. It seemed that it was impossible for her to storm and frown or even be angry, for if anything wrong was committed by her servants or dependents she only looked grieved and not dark and lowering.

After a short conversation it was settled that the three old dames should act for one month on trial as washerwomen, and that if during the prescribed time they behaved well they should then be taken into permanent service at wages of ten guineas per annum each. The next day they commenced the duties of their office, which they continued for some weeks to execute with equal punctuality, diligence, and sobriety, but not without many quarrels among themselves, often ending in furious fights, where tooth, nails, feet, and hands were employed with equal fury. In these fracas Little King, who always continued with them, was observed to be exceedingly active, exciting them by every means in his power to maul and mangle each other in the most horrible way. This circumstance, however, was not much wondered at, as his constant disposition to all kinds of mischief was well known, and he was considered by every member of the house of Strathfieldsay more as an evil brownie than a legitimate fairy.

Lord Charles had not revealed to anyone the strange proceedings of the old women of which he had been witness. He watched them narrowly, but nothing occurred further to warrant the suspicion of their being supernatural creatures. One afternoon he went alone to that part of the river's bank where he saw them walking on the waves. After wandering some time among the trees gathering field flowers, he lay down on the green turf and fixed his eyes on the blue sky, peering at intervals through the thick masses of overhanging foliage. The sounds that saluted his ear were all of a lulling, soothing character, only the soft murmuring of the water flowing, the distant cooing of the turtle-doves from the groves, or the whispering of winds in the trees. By degrees his eyes closed and a pleasing sensation of secluded rest glided through him; and he was gradually passing away into a profound balmy slumber, when suddenly an articulate voice came up on the breeze, which said, 'Meet us at midnight in the corridor.'

He started up and listened: the sound had died off, and no trace or tone of it remained

in the wild woodland music breathing around. "I'm bewitched," he exclaimed aloud. "Those beings have certainly cast a spell over me, but I will keep the assignation notwithstanding." Soon the full heavy toll of the great hall clock fell on his ear: twelve times the hammer resounded. He got up and extinguished his taper and quitted the room by a secret opening. His eyes glanced with an involuntary shudder down the long vista. At length a bright light appeared moving among the pillars. He advanced, and it receded slowly from him; but he still followed.

After a while he saw it ascending a stair which wound up the great round tower. The door opened with a harsh jarring din, and a vast lofty chamber became visible, faintly illumined by long glimmering rows of torches which cast on all sides a bloody and terrifying light. It had no roof; but the sky above seemed a star-lit and cloudy dome. A huge black canopy in the midst swayed to and fro in the wind that rushed through the open top; and underneath were set three coffins, each of which held a shrouded corpse. Lord Charles advanced toward them and, turning aside the winding sheets, perceived that they were the three old washerwomen. He trembled with dread, and at that instant a loud laugh rang in his ears. He looked up and perceived Little King and Queens standing beside him. One of them gave him a hearty slap on the shoulder. "Charles, don't be frightened: they were only our enchantments."

He opened his eyes at this salute, stared around wonderingly and became bewildered; for lo, he was lying in the pale moonlight on the river bank and no living creature near. He immediately ran to the house and repeated his tale to his father, mother, and brother. They laughed at it of course, but on inquiry it was found that the old women had been absent since the morning.

Investigation was set on foot, but no clue by which they could be traced was discovered. One countryman said that he had observed them about noon on the moor with Little King, but that he had occasion to turn away his eyes for an instant, and when he looked again he saw Little King and Queens standing in the same place but not the smallest mark of the old women. This was all that could, after the strictest search, be gathered, and they have never been seen or heard of from that time to this.





JAMES MONTGOMERY FLAGG

DRAWN BY JAMES MONTGOMERY FLAGG

He smiled for a long time upon the bent head. He touched her hair with gently caressing fingers. "Your saying that you will go away with me," he said, "shall be my happiness"

("Radium")



# Radium

What would you do if you were told by some one whose word was gospel with you that the old man with a scythe would turn in at your gate in about six months? Especially if you loved a woman not your wife and had been holding the fort gamely? Would you haul down the flag that advertised you as living up to your bargain and run up the other one of defeat? —or would it be victory—victory over conventions and for love? And you believed in a hereafter, and *she* didn't? That is the situation about which Gouverneur Morris has written a notable story—one that would easily rank him among the "top-notchers" if he were not already there. Rarely have we taken more pleasure in printing and recommending a story. Read it

By Gouverneur Morris

*Author of "The Claws of the Tiger," "Legay Pelham's Headache," "Living Up to Mottos," etc.*

Illustrated by James Montgomery Flagg

ESTERLING climbed the stairs slowly, as if in pain. He felt no physical pain; but that which he had been told by his doctor had squeezed all the courage out of him. He was to die in about six months. He was to meet death, you may say, by appointment.

It would not be a pleasant meeting, nor soon over. Esterling would be at least a week dying. The skeleton man with the scythe would torture him; and they would keep him alive with mighty medicines so that the tortures might be prolonged.

At the head of the stairs, Esterling paused before knocking at Harriet Wilding's door. He did not wish to tell her his troubles until he had his nerves in better command. He had always been fonder of his reputation for good sportsmanship than of anything else in his life. He had made and lost huge sums without turning a hair. The woman he had married had turned out to be a leech and a devil. But he had been unwilling to divorce her, because she was—a woman.

And when he met Harriet Wilding, and his heart went out to her, he accepted without wincing the fact that they could never be anything to each other but friends. And this was the more creditable to him in that he was the only, and spoiled, son of a rich father, and until chastened by disappointments had never denied himself anything that he wanted. It was truly said of him that he was a good sport.

And he stood at her door and controlled his nerves. Then he knocked, and when he heard her voice, pushed open the door, and entered her sitting-room, smiling.

She was not writing, as was her custom at that hour, but darning. To Esterling it

seemed very cruel ~~that~~ the girl he loved should not be able to throw her stockings away when they began to show wear, since, without feeling any drain upon his purse, he could so easily have filled her rooms to the ceiling with purple and fine linen.

His quick eye noted that in the pile of stockings on the floor beside her there were only three or four pairs that were of silk. And these were much darned as to their heels and toes. Then his eyes lifted to her face—from her material necessities to her fortune. She had a lovely face, girlish and maternal; a lovely skin that appeared to glow with a soft, warm rosiness. He had the impulse to gather her in his arms, and to cry his eyes out upon her deep, slow-moving breast. So a little boy who has been cruelly hurt restrains his outburst of weeping until the asylum of his mother's loving arms has been reached. But Esterling had never embraced the girl he loved, and who loved him. He had never kissed her face, nor even her hands. Sometimes, though, he had kissed things that belonged to her, or letters that she had written to him. And in his imagination he had walked with her in paradise and picked the Eden roses.

Esterling lifted his right hand to his right temple, and, smiling a little, said, "We, who are about to die, salute you."

Her eyes searched his face, and lingered upon his smile as if in uncertainty. Then, as if rejecting the smile, she rose swiftly, so that stockings and darning-silks and cotton slid from her lap to the floor. And she said: "You *aren't* joking! What has happened?"

"I have six months to live," he said, the smile still upon his face. "And I have come to tell my love."



A great light came into her eyes. "Your love?" she said. "That is a new word from you to me. But why not? It is quite true. And you have always been *my* love."

Esterling held out his strong arms to her, and she went into them quickly.

"I am dying, Egypt, dying," he said.

Her arms were around his neck. He looked down into her face. He could not speak for a long time. And when he did, his voice broke. "'Hang there like fruit, my soul, 'til the tree die,'" he said.

Then passion rose in the heart of each like a storm. Their embracing arms became rigid like iron, and their lips clung together as if they had been welded, and then behold, suddenly, as upon a signal, they sprang apart, and stood, and trembled.

The man was the color of ashes. The girl was all red, like some wonderful rose. The pulse in her throat could be seen beating with inconceivable rapidity. She took breath in short, sharp gasps.

Esterling walked to the window and stood looking out, his forehead pressed against the cold glass. Harriet went into the next room and bathed her face again and again in cold water. When she returned, it was difficult for either of them to make a beginning of speech. She first found words. Walking up to him from behind, she laid her hand upon his shoulder.

"Six months," she said; "are you sure?"

He did not at once turn around, but felt for her hand and held it in both his. "There is no doubt, my dear," he said. "What I thought was true. I am a—goner."

"What," she said, "can I do to make the rest of your life happy and your dying easy?"

"The dying," he said, "is nothing. If I am sure of anything it is that love like ours can never die. I know that we shall meet again."

"When did you begin to believe that?"

"When I learned that I must go away from you. Belief came to me then. When the annunciation comes to a woman, she is given a certain wonderful courage that she never had before. Otherwise she would go mad with fear. It is so with a man when he knows that he must die. Faith comes to him—faith in the future—faith in the permanence of whatever has been best in his life. Full well, my dear, the Lord God knows how to temper the wind to his shorn lambs."

These were curious words to fall from the lips of a man who had given the most of

his life to the laws of chance, to cards, horses, and contests. She felt that he was revealing depths into which she dared look only with awe and reverence, concerning which it was not even for her—the beloved—to ask questions. She prayed silently, in a kind of agony, to that God in whom she had never been able to believe, for faith like Esterling's. But no faith came: only the knowledge (it seemed knowledge) that when he died the rest would be silence, memory, and grief too great to contain.

"We have six months or less," said he, "in which to put our affairs in order."

They came out of the window entrance, still holding hands.

"Let's be natural, dear," he said. "Sit where you were, and go on with your darning."

She obeyed like a little child, and wondered what he meant by "putting our affairs in order." To her, since she felt but one necessity, there was but one interpretation. When she should find a faith equal to his in the hereafter of their love, in its eternity, then she felt would their affairs be in order and not before. But the man was turning over material matters in his troubled soul.

He drew up a chair, and watched her able fingers at their work of darning. "It's too late for divorce," he said, "and since I have spared Jenny so long, I think it would be playing it pretty low down to turn against her now. But how wonderful it would be if we could be married, and belong to each other, if only for a little while—for a day—for an hour. You—mine. Then death. . . . I want to talk with you about my will. You would never let me help you in any way."

"Never let *you* help *me*! The day I first heard your voice, it was as if some kind giant had picked me up in his arms and set me across a whole ocean of difficulties. You have helped me as no man ever helped a woman."

"And you have helped me in that way," he said. "But I was thinking of pleasures, luxuries—money. Now I have to leave you, you won't add to that agony by refusing—refusing—always refusing what would be so easy for me to do? I could not bear to leave you facing the hard necessities. I could not bear that. You won't make me?"

She shook her head without looking up.

"You must let me make you rich," he said.



"Not rich," she said, "please, not. If you must do something of that kind for me, why, make it very little—just enough. I don't want to be rich. The rich are too unutterably lonely."

"I want to put roses in the path of the woman I love," he said. "Don't forbid me."

"It's a cruel thing to think of, my dear," she said. "But tongues are cruel. If you put me in your will, people will put our two names in the pillory."

"But we," he said, "we would know that in our friendship and love there was never any offense to God or man."

"We never acknowledged that we loved each other till just now. There never has been any offense. Are we sure that there never will be?"

He saw the color rising strongly in her neck. His eyes swam in tenderness.

"This morning," she went on, "before you came I was my own. And if things were as they used to be, I should still be my own. But now things are altered. We have this awful knowledge about you. If there is any way in which I can make the rest of your life happy for you—then forget that I have been a good woman—that I have fought off all sorts of temptations—merely as a matter of course."

He smiled like an angel. "But you don't want your name dragged down in my will."

"My name—did I say *my* name! I was not thinking of what people would say about me, but of what they would say about *you*. They would say, 'He was very generous with his—women.' I couldn't bear that—for *you*. Don't think about *me*."

"Harriet."

"Yes, dear?"

"Will you come away with me for the rest of my life? In six months we could reach the ends of the earth. Will you come?"

"Of course," she said, "if it will make you happy."

He smiled for a long time upon the bent head. He touched her hair with gently caressing fingers. "Your saying that you will come," he said, "shall be my happiness. But your actual coming, oh, my darling, would hurt me worse than death. What would we think—you and I—of a man who devoted the last six months of his life to dragging down from their pedestal, where they have stood so long in serene goodness, virtue and nobility, his ideals—his love, rather, his saint—his all things to him?"

"If a mother—the noblest mother in all the world," said Harriet, "knew that her little son must die in six months, and that she could make him happy with this thing and that, if only she could get them for him, would she hesitate at any way or means? Surely she would steal, if it came to that—surely she would sell her virtue—if it came to that—as lightly, with as little thought, as you would fling a coin to a beggar. Virtue is a mighty big thing when you don't love anybody, but when you love somebody—oh, there is nothing in all the world, then, that is big and important except the love."

"But," said Esterling, "I have loved you for five years."

"And I you."

"So it is a good race that we have run—against nature—against temptation. It would be too bad to drop out now, just because the pace is a little swift—just as we have turned into the home-stretch."

She had offered him all that she had to offer, and he had refused. She had never been so proud of him as at that moment.

"Good," she said; "we shall go down the home-stretch neck and neck; and we shall so pass the winning-post. Let people say, 'There ran a couple of thoroughbreds.'"

Esterling bent over her hands, and kissed them. Then he sat back in his chair, and for a long time of silence adored her with his eyes. "I want to make you rich," he said presently, "before I die. I am worth a great deal. Half of my money will go to Jenny. I don't wish it known that I ever repudiated her even in my heart. After all, I married her. And perhaps, if I had been different, she would have been different. Then I am fond of Jack. I shall leave Jenny's share in trust, so that Jack will have a nice income when he comes of age, and the whole after Jenny's death. The other half of my money is for you, mostly to do with as you please."

"Oh," she protested, "*must* we talk about money—now?"

"If you don't mind too much—yes. Don't you understand how imperative it must seem to a man, who knows that he is going to die, to put his affairs in order? I shall be very busy the next six months; there are hundreds of kindnesses that I have put off doing. And you must help me with them, and with everything else that I have to do."



"And the first kind thought is for me?"

"Naturally," he said. "I shall manage in the course of a few days to transfer half of my property to you, so that your name will not appear in the transaction. You will have the spending of about two hundred thousand a year. But I shall ask you to make certain expenditures as I direct."

"Of course," she said, and with difficulty restrained her tears. Seeing which, he laughed softly, for pure love of her.

"To please me," he said, "you must always wear the finest linens and the loveliest dresses. About these things I ask you to be extravagant." He laughed aloud and said, "No more cotton stockings, Harriet."

"I love pretty things," she said simply.

"But you don't love jewels," he said, "do you?"

She shook her head.

"I am glad of that. But I should like you to have one string of splendid pearls in memory of me. I should like you to wear them always. Now there are some other things. My house and my household goods will be sold at auction after my death. I wish you to attend these sales. The furniture in my bedroom is old-fashioned mahogany of no particular value or beauty. It will knock down for a small sum. You will buy it, if you please, and give it good care in your house. It was my mother's. Of the horses, if the idea pleases you, you will buy two—they will cost you very little money. Nobody else will want them. Buy Vagabond and the pony Dude. They have grown old and gray in my service. See to it, I beg of you, that they want for nothing as long as they live, and that when at last life seems to be more pain than pleasure to them—why, let them be swiftly and kindly killed.

"Sarah, who was my nurse, will not stay on with Jenny after I am dead. She will have plenty of money, but she will be very lonely. She would wish to come to you, because I have told her that I love you. Then another thing—Don't cry, Dear Heart. All this must be thrashed out. Won't you let me finish, so that afterward there will be nothing left for you and me to talk about but our love?"

Presently she stopped crying, and he went on, in a voice that he strove to make matter of fact.

"Your people," he said, "are buried in Woodlawn. I have bought the lot next

yours. I shall direct that my grave be dug in the northwest corner of my lot—the head to the north. I should love to know that when your time comes, as come it must, my dear, you will lie near me—but with your head to the west. That way, for all eternity, till the last trumpet, I shall lie where I belong—at your feet."

"No—no," she cried; "at my side."

"At your feet," he said; "at your feet. It is at your feet that I have learned patience—and courage and all good things. There let me crumble to dust."

"No," she said, "they shall open your grave, when I am dead, and I shall lie at your side, for the long rest. Let people say what they like."

"No—no," he said, "at your feet."

"No," she said, "no."

"Listen, Love," and Esterling's face was gallant and beseeching, "does it matter? No. All of us that counts will be trillions of miles from that dust which is the rest of us. We shall see each other—we shall be together in—oh, call it heaven, for want of a better word."

Her face was terribly harassed. "Esterling," she said, "I've got to tell you. I don't believe in heaven—I don't believe in hell—I don't believe in anything—after death."

He paled as under an assault of sudden, unbearable pain. "But you must—you *must*," he said.

And she answered, "I can't—I can't."

"Why, then," he said, "if you love me—"

"I do—I do—oh, I *do*."

"You think that the separation we are approaching is eternal, and—oh, my dear—"

"Yes," she said, "I *am* suffering the tortures of the damned."

"How unfair," he said, "how unjust—that death, since I am full of faith, should be so comparatively easy for me—the man—and for you, for the woman, so—so utterly impossible."

"I have prayed and prayed for belief," she said, "and nothing has come of it. And nothing will come of it. And I *shall* see you—see you for the *last* time."

She broke down utterly.

## II

ESTERLING passed many hours of each day in Harriet's company. And although the final hour of separation hung always





JAMES MONTGOMERY FLAGG

DRAWN BY JAMES MONTGOMERY FLAGG

How faith returned to him he never knew. It was as if a something cool and soothing entered and permeated his entire being. The pain that he still endured seemed in comparison a little thing



over them, darkening the world, they fell back gradually upon such thoughts and topics as are interesting to lovers to whom death is in no way imminent. People live with pain and grow used to it; with horror, even with the fear of being found out. You cannot change the habits of years, habits of thought, habits of dreaming, merely because the hour of your passing has become definite. Esterling found it impossible to bound his outlook upon life within a circle of six months. His gardener wrote him that the season was excellent for planting, and Esterling gave orders for the setting out of hundreds of slow-growing oaks and white pines, though he himself might not live to see even the annuals in his garden come to maturity from seed.

People were leaving town. It became less and less conspicuous for the lovers to go about together. They motored a great deal, in Westchester County, hunting farms. It had been decided that Harriet should buy a handsome property, and begin building while Esterling was still alive to take pleasure in the planning of things together. If he was a little morbid at times, who shall blame him? He was to have his bedroom, his dressing-room, and his bathroom in the new house. They would be furnished with his mother's furniture. But the rooms would be always empty.

Meanwhile days passed like fragments of thistledown in a hurricane; and Esterling began to grow aware of certain internal disintegrations, presaging the end. He passed one terrible night during which his body was in anguish, and his mind; for it seemed to him as if his God had forsaken him. For many hours he was denied the benign and comfortable belief in the immortality of his soul. He was no better than a dog dying in a corner. There would be the final agony and after that nothing but swift material decay. Incased as it would be in lead and concrete his rotting body would not even fertilize a blade of grass in the great green lap of the world.

How faith returned to him he never knew. It was as if a something cool and soothing entered and permeated his entire being. The pain that he still endured seemed in comparison a little thing. He had been on the point of telephoning to his doctor and begging for an injection of morphine; but now, since pain was but an incident along the road to immortal things, he derided its power to hurt.

If Harriet had known that his incurable disease was beginning to cause him acute bodily suffering, she could not have borne it. He did not tell her, but hid the fact as you hide the faces of the dead from children. Sometimes it seemed to him as if he could not bear the sudden joltings of the motor-car without crying out; but he bore them. And at other times he was free from pain. And then he was gay as a child is gay when school has been dismissed and the water is warm in the swimming-pool.

What troubled him most was Harriet's lack of faith. He could not understand how anyone could see the world bursting into full flower in spring, after the iron rigors of winter, without believing *something*. Parting would be easy for them—comparatively—if only she could believe as he believed, not in definites perhaps, but in generalities. Parting would then be so very easy, even if they believed wrong.

But she could not believe. The power of belief was left out of her, and when she looked upon her beloved's face in the coffin, she would be looking upon it, so far as her own mental attitude could go, for the last time. And to Esterling this seemed a horror. He besought her to believe *something*, *anything*, and she could not.

"I should rather believe," he said, "that we are to meet again—if only in hell—than that death is the end forever. Can't you feel that nothing really can come to an end? Can't you feel it just a little bit?"

She shook her head. And his tormented heart yearned for her.

"Fortunately," he said, "it's true. You may not find out till you, too, die; but you will find out then, and you will rise up from the dead, clothed in immortality, and you'll say to the other angels: 'Which way, Esterling? Which way, Esterling?'"

"If there is a God," she said, "and I haven't believed in him—why, he'll never, never forgive me."

"Nonsense!" said Esterling. "When it is high time for you to have faith, he will see that you have it. Dear Heart, don't you know that if it weren't for faith the world would be a perfect bedlam of the screamings and howlings of those who are dying or about to die? To each and everyone faith comes some time, and in time. I had none. It came to me all at once, sure, almost tangible, like a present of flowers."

Once she leaned against him and gave



herself up to weeping and despair. "Without you," she had said, "I shall not have lived. Without faith—I shall not have died. Everything is denied me—the rapture of belonging, the anguish of bearing, and the calm sure joy of believing. Why was I ever born!"

As she wept and despaired, he held her closer and closer, and kissed her face, here—there—again and again, at first with a sort of timid gentleness, and then, his pulses tingling, with a kind of strong, bold mastery. She was as completely his to do with as he pleased as the watch in his pocket or the money in his bank; and the knowledge that this was so was what brought him to his knees, and aroused in him pity, which alone in the full tide of a man's passion is stronger than desire.

"Listen," he said, "please listen. It will be good in after days for you to remember that we didn't cut loose and drift with the current, but that we remained surely at anchor, side by side, weathering all the gales."

"Oh," she said, "if there is a God, he meant us for each other. But we have met, and we shall part like strangers. If only *she'd* die!"

"Hush!" said Esterling.

"I could bear your name. I could have a child in your image to comfort me. It is only in their children that people go on living after they are dead. *That* is the meaning of resurrection. Haven't I any rights at all? I am not even to hold you in my arms at the last. I am not even to mourn for you openly—and all that appearances may be preserved. Appearances! I would ride like the Lady Godiva through the streets of New York to prolong your life an hour, to smooth out a dark thought in your mind. Why watch my good name so jealously? There is still time for a little happiness. There's no longer any sporting blood in you, Esterling. You are not willing to take chances."

"I have been a great gambler all my life," said Esterling. "But do you know, with the least change of impulse here or there I might have been a bishop?"

He smiled, half serious, half amused, and in the midst of his smile pain shot through him from side to side, like a hot iron, and he went on smiling.

He went from Harriet to his doctor, as swiftly as a man, sweating with agony, can

walk, and stumbled into the consulting-room, knocking over a chair.

"I say, old man," he said, "I'm feeling bad now: is this the beginning of the end?"

The doctor and his assistant helped Esterling off with some of his clothes, and made him lie on a leather lounge in a bright blaze of light.

"Is what I've got—transmissible?" Esterling asked suddenly. "I'm not contemplating matrimony," he tried to smile; "I ask for information."

"No," said the doctor, "it is not." And began his examination. Ten minutes later he straightened up.

"All through?"

"All through, thank you."

"And what's the news?"

"I have no *right*," said the doctor, "to hold out hope to you, and yet—"

Esterling sat bolt upright; his pain vanished as at the advent of a miracle.

"What?"

"Radium. They have found an application of it in your disease. Just before you came I received the cabled news of what appears to be a cure."

"Was the patient far gone?"

"Yes. You must go to London at once."

Esterling rose, and dressed swiftly.

"If you wish, I will go with you. You ought to have some one in case of an emergency. A nurse properly instructed would do."

"What would she have to know?"

"Only to give strychnine in case of heart failure."

"Doctor—I am speaking as to a priest—could you teach a woman—not a trained nurse—to do the needful?"

"In five minutes. Send her to me."

"Let me think," said Esterling; and presently, "No," he said. "Why is it that even dying men cannot quiet the devils in them? *You* pick out a nurse for me will you?" The doctor bowed gravely.

### III

"I am going to London."

"I am going with you."

"No, Dear Heart. Listen—if I am cured I shall divorce my wife. It is better that I should hurt her than you. And all will be well with us. If I die—does it matter?"

"When do you sail?"

"To-morrow at ten."





JAMES IMPITOMERY FURN

DRAWN BY JAMES MONTGOMERY FLAGG

"But, my dear lady—" the doctor objected. "Don't tell me that he is dead," she insisted. "I haven't got—he won't hear you? Even if you are one of those unfortunates who can't believe in anything, sage—in his ear?" "Oh," said the doctor





ten up at three o'clock in the morning to talk nonsense. Will you do as I ask? How do you know at least have the courtesy to respect the wishes of those who can. Will you give the mes-  
wearily, "if you wish. I'll take a chance on it"



"I may come to see you off?"

"Of course."

She sighed. At least he had granted her one small privilege.

"They think," he said, "that radium may cure me. It has worked miracles. It is life, energy, immortal warmth. Science believes that it is the secret of creation; the church, that it is dust from the Master's workshop. Only think—already—all pain has gone. I have never felt better in my life."

"Please—please," she said, "take me with you."

"Don't tempt me so—don't tempt me so," he said. "Don't make me wrong you, now that in the world there is a hope for us of all good things in their time. Only have patience, and courage."

At three o'clock the next morning, Harriet waked suddenly and sat bolt upright in her bed. And listened. The voice which she seemed to have heard, whose swift commanding tones had waked her, did not speak again. She trembled and shivered. She rose and groped her way to the telephone which Esterling had recently had installed for her. She gave the number of his house to the sleepy operator who answered her call. When, presently, she heard Esterling's own voice, clear and cheerful, she gave a little cry of joy.

"Oh," she said, "something made me think that something awful had happened to you."

The sound that came over the wire was like a contented laugh. And then his voice. "Go back to bed," he said, "it's three o'clock. Nothing awful has happened. Nothing awful is ever going to happen. Radium. Dust from the Master's workshop. Good-by, Dear Heart—my heart—sweetheart—till we meet again. And never, never forget that when you come, I shall be waiting."

"Esterling! Esterling!" Her voice rose almost to a scream. But she had no answer. She hooked back the receiver and shook it violently up and down.

Once more the sleep-ridden central answered, and once more imperatively Harriet demanded Esterling's number.

"I want to speak to Mr. Esterling. . . Why not? Who is talking? Doctor—"

The doctor's voice, tired and tremulous but patient, came over the wire: "It came

sooner than we had any reason to believe it would. Poor Mr. Esterling's troubles are all over."

"When was it?" she cried, and it seemed to her that all her chances of happiness in this world and the next depended upon the answer.

"At four minutes after twelve."

A great wonder akin to joy surged in her heart. "I am Harriet Wilding, who loved him and whom he loved."

"I know."

"Will you do something for me?"

"Gladly."

"Go to him, and whisper in his ear. Say this, 'She received your message, and all is now well with her.' Say, 'This life is nothing.'"

"But, my dear lady—"

"Don't tell me that he is dead. I haven't gotten up at three o'clock in the morning to talk nonsense. Will you do as I ask? How do you know he won't hear you? Even if you are one of those unfortunates who can't believe in anything, at least have the courtesy to respect the wishes of those who can. Will you give the message—in his ear?"

"Oh," said the doctor wearily, "if you wish. I'll take a chance on it."

The doctor went to the room in which lay the body of Esterling. He felt that he was come upon a fool's errand.

About the clear and beautiful head there seemed to hover a dim radiance. It was not the first time that the doctor had noticed this phenomenon in connection with the dead. He had even constructed a plausible scientific theory to account for it.

He knelt, and whispered Harriet's message into the dead man's ear. He felt all kinds of a fool. When he had finished, he rose, and noted that the hovering radiance had gone away. There was no light in the room but that of four candles. And it seemed to the scientific man, tired out and distraught, as if the radiance was a sentient thing that had waited to receive a message, and having received it, had at once departed.

Harriet did not even wear black for Esterling. She planned out for herself a life of patience and good deeds, and she looked forward to death with a sort of serene rapture.

The next story by Gouverneur Morris, "*All That Troubled Them*," will appear in the July issue.





DRAWN BY JIMMY HANCOCK WILLIAMS

"Mother is out," she said; "so I—I came down. I saw you get out of the cab I am very ill, Frank"



# It

Do you like stories dealing with the unseen—and the strange forces which are difficult to explain, but which have at times a tremendous influence over us? If so, here is a story that will take a mighty grip on your interest. It deals with the time-old fallacy that it is permissible for our young men to sow their "wild oats" without paying the penalty. Following this idea, It comes to blight the love of two young people—all through a piece of foolish advice. Not only is the soul of the man but that of the girl attacked. Mr. Thompson utters a powerful warning to those who, even with the best intentions, deem it wise to inoculate a pure, idealistic nature with worldly experience.

By Vance Thompson

Illustrated by John Alonzo Williams

FOR three weeks It had not appeared to him; not since the shuddering night he told her of It—not since then. The mere fact that he had spoken of it to some one else seemed to have driven It away. Mysteriously as It had come, so It had departed. Twenty days and nights of peace! The hours, even the dark hours, passing lightly as homing birds! And how deeply he had slept—going down into the deep springs of life to bathe there and come, regenerate, up into the world again. Never had he known such a wonder of dreamless sleep. And he had told himself, again and again, that It had gone away forever.

Yet to-night, once more, all the signals were set.

He knew It would come.

He was in haste to be gone; gently he bade her good-by. She clung to him, but he loosed her hands and went away. The autumn storm, full of wind and rain, flapped and bellied in the midnight streets. The face he confronted the storm with was hard and hopeless, but he held himself erect, and his eyes were steady.

## I

### THE THING WITHOUT A FACE

WHEN he had gone, Zanthia stood motionless in the great drawing-room. She was a tall girl of twenty, with quiet, gray eyes and brown hair. Her long, straight body was delicately fashioned, and the evening gown

of silver and gray made her seem taller and lither than she was. After a moment she went toward the door, and her finger was on the knob that shut off the electric light, when suddenly she checked and swung round, facing the room. She had a feeling that he had left something. Perhaps he had forgotten his gloves? She looked about the room. No; he had forgotten nothing. She turned out the light. Behind her the drawing-room was black. In front of her was the lighted hall, and at the end of it the wide, up-going staircase. She traversed the hall swiftly—a slim, silvery figure that rippled and shone like a grayling moving up-stream. Again she turned a knob, and behind her the hall vanished into blackness. She glanced back over her shoulder into the dark. It was a thoughtful look, not timid. And so, as she mounted the stairs, shutting off light after light, she looked back with questioning eyes into the darkness that marched behind her, step for step. And she came to the door of her own room. There, for the first time, the blackness was in front of her. She gave an almost imperceptible start and stepped back. She was hardly conscious she had done so. In a second more she had entered her room, made it safe with light, and closed the door.

Her maid, who had fallen asleep in a chair by the window, rose with sleepy apologies, and "*Pardon, mademoiselle, mais—*"

"It doesn't matter, Elise; make haste," Zanthia said; and as Elise unhooked her she let down her own hair. When she was in



bed, Elise extinguished the last light and went out, closing the door noiselessly. Zanthia lay quite still, with folded hands and feet, staring at the dark above her.

"I know he has forgotten something," she said. She could not get it out of her mind that he had left something behind him. After a while she added, "It is just because I am worrying about him."

She thought of him out in the autumnal storm; she could hear it snarl and slap at her curtained windows.

Abruptly she sat up in bed, her hand on her heart. It was as though a cold wind had blown through her. She waited.

At last she whispered to herself: "The door is open. Elise did not close it."

There was no light to tell her the door was open. Both in the room and in the hall it was dark; but the darkness in the hall—in some obscure way she knew it—was of a different quality from the darkness in her room. She had heard no sound of the door moving, if, indeed, it had moved; but she knew that surely it was open—wide open on alien and terrible darkness. In her vague fear she did not think of the electric lamp at her bedside. Slowly, as one putting foot into an icy stream, she stepped out of her bed and went (a white, groping figure) to the door. It was as she thought—the door stood wide. She shut it and shot the bolt. Then she flashed back into the safety of her bed.

"And now I shall sleep," she told herself; but her eyelids did not close on her wakeful eyes. For a long time she lay thinking of him, until it seemed as if every fiber of her body were being drawn to him—as though its million of sentient cells were marching toward him, a shining army, through the streets of stone and storm. She had but to close her eyes to see him—Frank Hoodspith. How much a part of him the name seemed! He was just such a man as a Frank should be—open, forthcoming, full of laughter and living words.

And the other name? She thought of it as something hooded and mysterious—a shadow and a secret. That, too, was part of him. So well she knew. She had known him all her life. Their love had had no beginning that she could call to mind. It had always been—child-love at first; then youth-love, and now the love—knowing, choosing, willing—that was flowering to perfection. Yes, through closed eyes she

could see him. Across the night his clear, blue eyes signaled love to her—her man, who walked in the shadows. What was it, he had told her, three weeks ago, when he held her with strong, unreleasing hands and whispered to her, his cheek against her own? She had listened vaguely—hearing, rather, the beating of his heart—dazed with physical happiness, so close he held her.

"He is always having queer fancies," she told herself; "now what was that one? Something about the globe of life. I can't remember."

She thought of him as a poet, a seer of hooded things—her poet; she turned in her bed, limp and drowsy, trying to cradle herself into sleep to the rhythm of his name. She was just on the verge of the pool men call sleep when a bell rang.

She started up and took the telephone receiver from its hook on her night-table and set it to her ear. The voice that came from the telephone asked, "What number, please?"

"I didn't call," said Zanthia; "the bell rang here."

"Mistake—sorry," said the voice.

Zanthia hung up the receiver and lay down again. Now, sleep would not come. Wakefulness, keen and bright as ice, lay upon her brain. And her eyes roved through the darkness of the room, from hidden ceiling to window, from invisible wall to unseen floor.

On the floor at the foot of her bed was something that was not darkness, that was not light. It was viscous and opaque. It squatted there at the foot of her bed—a boneless thing like an oyster—a dirty radiance on It, as of tarnished metal. It was like something bloated and leprous and white, washed up from the unsunned bottom of the sea. Pallid and formless It squatted there—a Thing without a face.

She stared at It with eyes fixed in terror. Her body was locked in the immobility of stone. If she breathed, she knew it not. And in this blurred night, where all was horror, one compelling horror struck most fiercely at her—the tarnished Thing—the half-human mass of iridescent slime—the Thing without mouth or eyes—smiled at her. (God help and pity those who see it—the smile of the Thing that has no face!)

All night—all the blurred night through—the horror swayed and churned in her immobile body; and her eyes could not



close and her lips could not pray. At last dawn—a blurred, tumultuous dawn, and the formless Thing—the slime that shone and smiled—was not. Zanthia did not move. Still staring with lead-gray eyes at the place where It had squatted, she lay motionless. Her hair fell, moist and flat, down one side of her face and over one white shoulder. Her lips were slightly parted.

A bell rang.

Zanthia  
rose  
on  
her



"It doesn't matter, Elise; make haste," Zanthia said; and as Elise unhooked her she let down her own hair

elbow. She gave a great gasp and breathed deeply. The horror went out of her eyes. She touched her body curiously. It felt cold and hollow, like a shell; then waves of warmth and color bathed her from head to feet, and the tide of life ran home to her heart. She realized the telephone-bell was ringing. She took down the receiver with a feeble hand.

"What is it?"

The voice that came back to her was glad with all the joys of human life; it was Frank's voice, clear and exultant.

"I couldn't wait to tell you, dear; I couldn't wait! Nothing happened, Zanthia; nothing! And I, who thought the signals were set! Nothing—just a glorious, empty night. And sleep—human sleep."

She could hear his laughing happiness.

"All night I slept quietly—like a tree. Dear Zanthia, you have saved me from hell."

And then he spoke to her in lover's speech, mystic, sacred, in which there is no blasphemy, since love itself is divine; as the daughter of Jairus

must have spoken to him who leaned over the bed in the upper chamber, saying, "*Talithi Cumi*," so the man spoke to her. And was she not his savior—she who had taken It away, out of his nights and his life?

"I am very glad, Frank," she answered slowly. "Come to me as soon as you can; I will try to see you."

Then she cowered down into her bed, thinking—thoughts too subtle for words, thoughts too subtle for prayer.

## II

### THE GHOUL OF SOULS

THEY had known each other all their lives. In a far-off degree they were kin—part of the same human rhythm. Their first memories were of an old garden



with a vista on the sea, where they played together. Frank, in the long years of school and college, had spent all his holidays with the Bewicks—at winter in town and in summer at the country place. He had known no other home. His love for Zanthia was an essential part of his life. Life seemed meant for loving her.

He was graduated from college on his twenty-first birthday. Neither Mrs. Bewick nor Zanthia was present, and by the first train he went to them and found them—as he had hoped he should—sitting together in the old garden. Mrs. Bewick was a thin, gray little woman, bright and bird-like. Her early married life had been full of pretty, social triumphs. She was a widow now, an invalid—"I only live for Zanthia." Lying in the long garden-chair, she sparkled up at Frank Hoodspith and praised him.

"And now that you are out of college, Frank, what are you going to do?" she asked.

"I've come for Zanthia, aunt."

Mrs. Bewick laughed brightly.

"I might have known it! All the better! I'm going to talk seriously to you, Frank. And you, Zanthia dear, go tell them we will have tea indoors. Frank will help me in after we've had our talk."

"Isn't my place here, mother?" Zanthia said quietly. "It's me Frank wants to marry."

She stood up, very tall, and went swiftly to her lover's side. Her face flushed, but she faced her mother bravely.

"You children!"

Mrs. Bewick laughed again in her pretty, urgent way—the way she had been taught to laugh when she was young.

"Surely you can trust your mother, dear? I only want a word with Frank—as between mother and son—and I don't think it would be quite delicate in you, dear, to insist."

Mrs. Bewick had all the hideous cant of her generation, and she made of delicacy something monstrously indelicate—that would give pause to a drunken sailor. For a second, Zanthia was drawn taller—as a woman is drawn taller by pride or anger or death—but in the end she did not speak; without a look at her lover she went slowly up the path to the house.

"And now, Frank, let us be serious. You know I want Zanthia to marry you, and I trust and love you. When I die, I

shall be very glad to feel she is in your hands. But you are only a boy."

He protested.

"Can I trust my little girl to a boy like you?"

"I am a man now, aunt."

"But what do you know of the world—of the dangers of life? In everything that counts you are as much a child as she is. I hope she will always be the same—sweet and innocent. But you, Frank, must be wise for two. You must be a real husband—not only her lover but her guardian and friend. Wait, Frank—I have not finished. I am a woman of the world, and I know. Such a child's marriage as this would only be laying up wretchedness for both of you. Go out in the world, Frank; make yourself fit to meet men and women. Find your place in the world. Learn to be sure of yourself—self-reliant. Then, in a year—if you have proved yourself a man indeed—I shall not say 'no.'"

The boy pled with her; and the only argument he had was his love.

This loving mother spoke out of the depths of her wisdom—all the wisdom she had been able to acquire in a life that had always been artificial, that had been based on sex-slavery and social sham; and she knew nothing else. She believed that a man should come full-made to a woman—a guardian, a patron, adept in life, as her captain-husband had come to her. How should she know that the man cannot find his place in the world, save with the woman at his side, going step by step with him; that the man has no more right to face alone the "dangers of life" than the woman has—how should she know?

Then, out of the mean cave of her wisdom came another of those precepts of her generation—a precept black and loathsome as a flying toad; what she said, smiling at him lightly, was, "You must sow your wild oats first, Frank."

"Good God!" he said, shocked into angry shame; then he added sullenly, "I'm not going to sow any wild oats."

"Then you will after you're married," she replied, out of her wisdom. "I'm a worldly-wise old woman."

She had her way—how should she not? Frank dined at the house. Mrs. Bewick did not wish to leave them alone, but her daughter said, "I, too, wish to speak to Frank alone," and the lovers went out into



the lighted conservatory beyond the dining-room. They were out of ear though not of eye. Zanthia, with her nineteen years, was a woman sure of herself—and sure of him. She gave him both her hands and stood in front of him, white and brave and steadfast.

"We must yield to mother in this," she said, "but it will not make any difference—except in the dreary waiting."

"Only that—our love cannot change."

"Our love change? Why, it is us! It's just us and everything we are."

He put his arms round her and kissed her, and she clung to him and kissed him again and again—until her young, pure soul seemed to hang upon his lips.

"Always mine," she whispered.

"Always yours."

"No, always ours," she said softly; she touched his face with her hand and went back from him toward the room.

He sailed the next day. This is not the history of Frank Hoodspith's travels.

He saw many cities, always alone. He made acquaintances here and there, but none of them interested him. He did not care to go racing; cards did not amuse him—for money-loss meant little to him; he was not a drinking man, and the barrooms of continental Europe, haunted by Americans, were noisy, tawdry, and foul; so the men he might have met he did not meet. Mrs. Bewick was right in a way; he was a boy—clean-bodied, high-minded, rather shy, a dreamy lover of beautiful thoughts. He went his way alone.

One summer night found him in Paris—that ghoul of souls who has but to whistle and, from all the extremities of the earth,



She stood up, very tall, and went swiftly to her lover's side. Her face flushed, but she faced her mother bravely



men and women flock to kiss her dirty feet. (The dreamers come, too, and the poets—with their white dreams.) It was a radiant night. The summer moon fought with the electric lights in the streets below. The air was like warm wine. Hoodspith walked out of his hotel into the Place Vendôme. At that hour it was a quiet place—a moon-drenched pool of silence out of which rose the tall pillar, whereon stands, implacably alone, the vanished greatness of France. A few minutes' walk away the boulevards flamed and clanged. Frank had no mind for them. He wandered in the moonlit square, wondering a little that the blood in his body was so heavy, and his brain so dark.

Now, there is a strange thing. An unknown woman passes you in the street and goes her way; and afterward and through the long years you think of her and wonder—wonder that beauty should have called to you with so imperative a voice and nothing come of it—nothing. And again, in the quiet of a moonlit square, a woman confronts you; and you loathe her painted mouth and ophidian eyes, and yet, when she lays her hand on your arm and laughs, you walk on by her side.

That night Frank Hoodspith had gone out without his armor on. Oh, Mrs. Bewick was right—he did not know the world! He had no weapons of defense—weapons neither of laughter, contempt, nor pity. This is not the history of his life in Paris. Innocence falls swiftest and deepest. Only this need be said: He sowed wild oats in the fair field of his youth; he let in the wild boars to his rose-garden. There were moments when he thought of Mrs. Bewick—with grim, sardonic laughter. There were moments when Zanthia's face rose before



Then she drew back and looked at him intently



him, and his soul shuddered and sickened within him. There came a time when he dared not think of her. . . .

One night he was motoring from Trouville. He was driving the car himself and at high speed. A black stretch of road. And in the road Something. It was Something that shone, glairous, indistinct in the night. He swerved the car abruptly and wrecked it between mile-post and tree. He came to consciousness in his bed in the hotel on the Place Vendôme, where he had kept on his rooms. There was a nurse in white-and-blue uniform at his bedside. His man, at the door, was just admitting the physician. They said he could pull through. Indeed, in three days he was able to get out of his bed for an hour. That day he sent away the nurse. He hated her; he hated her clear eyes and her clean womanhood; the very atmosphere of purity she radiated was a reproach—it burned him like acid, and his very soul was raw with shame and remorse. That night he spent with them—with remorse and with shame. His sin seemed a living thing. In his agony of soul he cried aloud—a sharp and bitter cry. He buried his face in his pillow; then slowly he uncovered his eyes and stared out into the darkness of the room, for he knew he was not alone. Formless, monstrous, shining, a Gray Thing squatted at the foot of his bed.

### III

#### THE HOME OF THE GRAY THING

IN mid-space, in mid-time, there floats a pale and shining globe. A fetid mass, so loosely aggregated, it is held together only by the universal rhythm, as slowly it revolves—slowly, ceaselessly. There are no stars above it or below; it floats forever in mid-space, in mid-time. Now and then the surface heaves, as though formless things were trying to escape, but the slow revolutions of the sphere bind them fast. They are prisoned in that dull, ceaseless, circular movement. A torpid ball, shining with glairous light—and it is made up of souls kneaded together as putty is kneaded together—soul-matter, sin-matter, souls of the insufficient and the unachieved, souls of suicide and sin, the wasted and frustrate souls that found no way of life. Unborn souls, the blind and dumb souls that never had lips, the souls that never looked

through eyes—kneaded together by the eternal and universal rhythm, they swing forever—a swarming ball—in mid-time, in mid-space. . . .

There is one note struck on the piano which will set a dog howling; one note to which the bird will come; one note that will call the deer from his hiding-place; one violin-string sings, and in uttermost space its mate vibrates to the same note. . . .

Pallid and leprous, the sphere floated in a world where there is neither space nor time. Suddenly, through the sonorous ether sped a great cry, bitter and loud, and, as a knife hews, it hewed off a fragment of the viscous mass. And the fragment entered time and space. . . .

Monstrous, formless, with the sheen of impure light on It, the Gray Thing sat in the dark of his room, at his bedside. Not always motionless; sometimes there was a vague palpitation that stirred It into a horrible semblance of human life. Night after night, he fled from It, with the sickness of fear on him, into lighted places. There It never came. So he lived fierce, sleepless nights, full of light and flame and tumult, but sooner or later he found himself—somehow, somewhere—waking from sleep in the dark; and It sat by his bedside, the dumb Thing—monstrous, unborn. At last he came to question It—the faceless Thing! Why had It come to him? What cry, bitter and loud, had called It from Its home in nothingness? To what hideous part of him was Its vibration akin? And "God! It's my living sin," he said.

At times he had almost a kind of pity for It, as for something unhuman, deformed. By day or under the electric lights of midnight, he felt in some obscure way that It was hunting him—as a blind dog hunts for a spring of water. Then he would decide to face It and, making a darkness in his room, he would lie down on couch or bed. Always It was there, eyeless, mouthless, gray.

He went by day to Havre; but at night It was on the ship with him. It was with him in New York, his first night ashore.

### IV

#### THE BROKEN RHYTHM

THE Bewicks were at their town nouse in lower Fifth Avenue. When he was shown into the drawing-room, Zanthia



kissed him. He did not take her in his arms. Then she drew back and looked at him intently.

"You are ill, Frank?"

The face he showed her was haggard and white, dry-lipped, hollow-eyed. He sat down weakly.

"I have been very ill—a motor-car accident—I did not like to write you—I am better now. But I cannot sleep."

She went to him with startled sympathy and took his head in her hands, murmuring, "My poor boy!" He closed his eyes. From her hands a healing quiet seemed to flow into his brain and into his heart. He drew her down on his knee and kissed her gently. She lay in his arms and let him kiss her face and hair and throat—softly. Physical happiness went over her in waves, slow and sweet and warm. And she questioned him, in a low voice, about his illness. He laid his cheek against hers and whispered to her of mad nights, of darkness, of It—a confession hushed and shamed and confused that did not cross the threshold of her understanding. How could he tell her, or how could she comprehend? In what words can sin speak to virtue—the unclean speak to the pure?

"You have suffered away from me," she said, "and I, too, have suffered, dear. I have ached for you. You will not go away from me again?"

He held her face up gently and looked into her clear, gray eyes with the soul-stricken look of a sinful man; but what she saw in the look was love—love, and a sweet fear like her own. It was as though their two human forms of the universal rhythm had blended in an indivisible accord.

"I will not live except in your love; I will not live except in your life, and in you," he told her. Then they whispered something.

He did not wait to see Mrs. Bewick.

Early that night he went to his room in a hotel, locked the door, put out the lights, and lay down on the bed, waiting with clenched hands and teeth. The minutes passed; he waited. An hour dragged by—nothing. Slowly his hands relaxed; he sat up and with keen eyes peered into the darkness—nothing. And the night passed as he sat there, staring wide-eyed for the Thing that did not come. Joy crept slowly over him like a tide. When dawn came he could have shouted his gladness. Oh,

well he knew it was she who had banished the foul, dumb ghost of his sin! Her purity had slain It, and It was dead. Then a dread grew on him that It might come another night; it had not found him and was questing him, like a blind dog in the alien city. He dared not hug his joy too close. The next night he watched again, and the next, and many nights—even for three weeks. It was on the last night that he had gone, radiant and confident in his glorious escape, to Zanthia's house; and there—even as she clung to him—even then!—he felt that the signals of Its sinister approach were set in the very core of his being. He went out into the storm with the soul of a man going to meet damnation. Again nothing. The whole long night was empty. The blind dog did not even fumble at the door. Day had no sooner come than he cried his triumphant happiness to her over the telephone that tied their beds together. "Oh, my darling, your love and purity have killed It—the Thing without a face!" With that, words of laughter and prayer; and then her voice, faint and thin, asked him to come to her as soon as he could.

He called at nine o'clock; at eleven o'clock he saw Mrs. Bewick and heard: "Poor Zanthia has a frightful headache. No, of course you can't see her." Thrice he called. It was near dusk when he was admitted. The great drawing-room was empty and the light in it gray and dim. At last Zanthia appeared; she wore a house gown and her thick hair was massed roughly on her head, one great strand falling over her cheek and throat. She tried to put it away with a shaking hand. A pitiable figure, she steadied herself against the door-post and lifted her white face to his. Her chin trembled piteously when she tried to speak.

"Mother is out," she said; "so I—I came down. I saw you get out of the cab. I am very ill, Frank."

He helped her to a sofa at the far end of the room, away from the street windows. He could feel the tremor that shook her slim body as he half carried her across the room and laid her down. He knelt beside her and asked her for God's sake what was the matter. She fought for courage and self-control. Most of the day she had spent blindly, in sobbing prayer; but at intervals had come to her a knowledge subtle and implacable, of what this Thing was that



had come out of hell to sit at the foot of her bed and smile. It may be the confession he whispered to her the night he came first to her from abroad, had found lodging in her subconscious mind, and had risen to her waking memory at the shock of Its appearance. Certainly, she knew. And she fought for strength to keep it from him. That was the wedding-gift he had brought her! His living sin! That was the Thing that was slaying him, then. Her poor Frank, her poor, sad, broken man—her poor, sin-tortured lover! No; she would not tell him; she would not send It back to him; it should bide with her and slay her—if God would only let her save him from It and the horror of It. Fiercely she fought for self-mastery—for will. He knelt by the sofa holding her hands, trying to soothe her, seeking to understand.

Suddenly she wrenched away from him and sat up, her hands on her temples.

"God!" she said hoarsely, "it's dark in here!"

She feared the dark! He knew as well as though she had told him what had happened. So, often, he had cowered in the dark. He drew her down on the sofa. His voice came in a harsh whisper, "Not you—you have not seen It—not you!" She was staring beyond him with eyes hallucinate, fixed, metallic. He turned and looked. Behind him the Thing squatted, shapeless, swaying a little, shimmering with foul light, and on the faceless Thing a smile as though happiness, horrible and vague, pulsed in It.

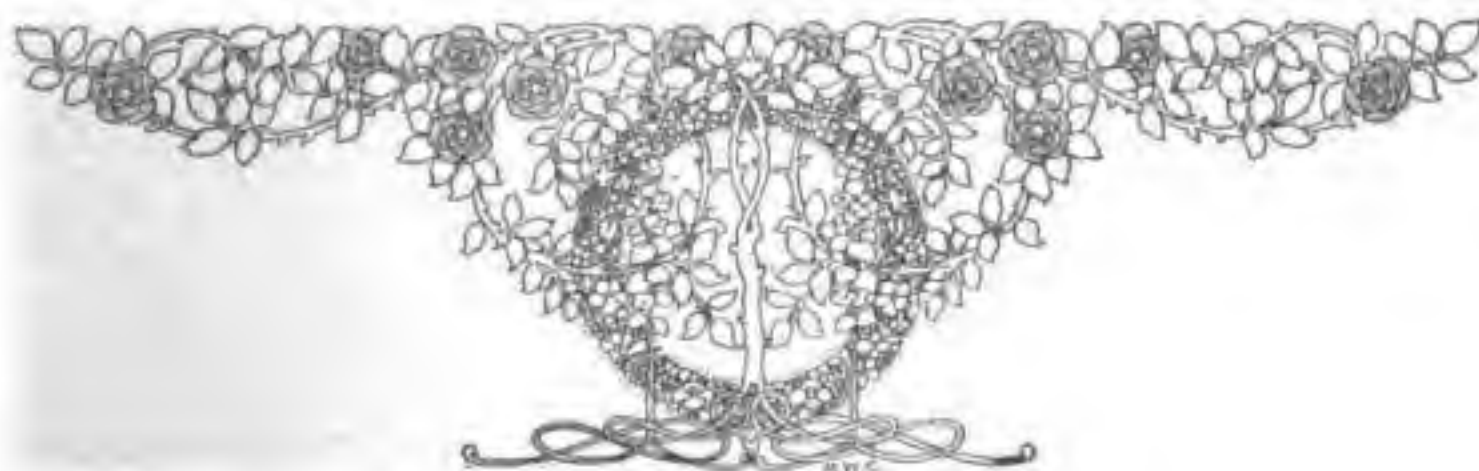
With his hands, with his face, with his body, he covered her that he might shut the sight of It from her eyes and fend her from Its touch. So close he held her his very body seemed to form a shell about her to shield her from that unclean ghost of

hell. So close his very soul seemed to melt into her. And, in their terror and their love, they whispered God's name again and again.

A sense of cold touched them. A faint whimper traversed the room. Down-looking, he saw It was not there. Where It had glimmered foully in the dark, It was not; out of the darkness had It been driven forth—by a new and mightier vibration than that which had called It earthward—for the love of woman is mighty, aye, even unto the destruction of the living sin.

Then there was light in the great drawing-room; they stood and looked at each other, long and deep, with soul-searching eyes and white, amazed faces. Love!

Into mid-space and mid-time the out-cast Thing fled; an eyeless and mouthless Thing that seemed to wail and weep. Hopeless now; for the note that called It out of hell was fused into a new note of white purity that sent no vibrations down those black caverns of ether. Vainly It had tried to cling to her, obscurely realizing that, in her great love, she really had more of the man than he had of himself; that night when he went away he left his soul behind in the great house. Vainly It had sought to live on her pure vibration—too white and keen. That same note, which struck on muddy copper attracts, when sounded from a silver bell repels. Vainly. The new eurhythm of perfect love had severed Its connection with earth forever. Deaf now to the cries from earth, blind and dumb, It was drawn back to Its eternal prison in the writhing ball, turning slowly in mid-time and in mid-space—a torpid mass, fetid and glairous, kneaded together of soul-matter and sin-matter, of lives unaccomplished and loves unfulfilled and souls unborn—forever.







"And I don't care if he does!" she cried. The old people were horrified and flabbergasted



# Golgotha

Mr. Morris, who seems to have a surer and more genuine feeling for the weird than any other living writer, quite surpasses himself in this remarkable tale. He takes us over into the days when the great war is finished. There are some stories you never forget; this, we venture to assert, is one of them.

By Gouverneur Morris

Illustrated by John Alonzo Williams

**J**ULES PIPELIN was a vague sort of a dreamer. He was the kind of man who expects to get rich without doing any hard, steady work. He spent more than half his time in the Forest of Argonne looking for heaven knows what—gold, perhaps. But, of course, when the great war broke loose, he had to change his ways and work as hard and steadily as anybody else. We all said it would be the making of him if he didn't get shot. But his was a stubborn character. Some said that he had a drop of German blood.

All through the war he worked like a dog and fought like a lion, not because he loved France but because he loved fighting, and the minute it was over he took up his habit of loafing just where he had left off.

But he never again had the same poverty-stricken appearance of former days. There was always now a little money in his pocket, and a bit of something good to eat in his mother's larder. He still spent more than half his time in the Forest of Argonne, and he always came home smiling, looking, indeed, very much as a handsome tom-cat looks just after swallowing a mouse.

From having a little money in his pocket, he soon passed to having a little money in the bank. People said that, during the war, he must have enjoyed opportunities for stealing and made the most of them. It was rumored that he had valuables buried in the cellar of his mother's house.

After a year or so of continuing prosperity, he began to make little trips to Paris. "A man needs a little change now and then," he would say to some poor friend who worked twelve hours a day in one spot the year round.

He often came back from these trips with a handsome present for his mother and a headache for himself. "I have so many friends in Paris," he would say, "and they can't leave a fellow alone. And what would you? I am a good sport." This was the sum of his English.

Mimi Valons was the belle of our village. A robust, able, red-cheeked girl, full of fun and very beautiful. Pipelin had never paid any attention to her, nor she to him.

When the Germans came to our village, Mimi had a romantic time of it. Her father and mother dug a hole in the cellar of their house, made her lie down in it, and covered the opening with old boards and dirt and goose-feathers. Jules Pipelin was said to have advised this, just before the French withdrew from the village. But old man Valons always claimed the ruse as his own. "It wasn't," he explained, "that we were so much afraid of the Germans as of Mimi. That girl would make eyes at a superannuated Turk."

One day, a crowd of us was at the station when Pipelin arrived from one of his little trips to Paris.

"Hallo, people!" he cried. "How goes it? As for me, I have a perdition of a headache."

Then his eyes lighted on Mimi. She had a red ribbon in her hair, and it was as if Pipelin saw her for the first time.

"By St. Denys," he exclaimed, "there's a girl with power, and I never noticed it before! My dear Mimi, if you love mankind, put your hand on my forehead and take the ache away!"

Mimi came forward giggling and laid her brown, capable hand on his forehead. Then



we all giggled—all except Pipelin. He gave a great, long, happy sigh of relief.

"It is gone," he said, "like the Prussians."

After that episode, he was more often seen with Mimi than not. If he was lazy and a dreamer, he was also a strong, masterful man.

One day he went to see Mimi's parents. He approached them, groaning like an ox.

"What is the matter with you?" they asked.

"Alas," he said, "Mimi is no longer safe in this village! You had better hide her again in that hole in the cellar and cover the opening with old boards and dirt and goose-feathers."

The parents were greatly alarmed.

"What has happened?" they exclaimed. "Who has threatened her?"

"I am threatening her," he said, "miserable, uncontrolled scapegrace that I am! And if she is not hidden from me, I shall eat her up."

Here Mimi, who had been listening behind the door, rushed out and threw her arms around Pipelin's neck.

"And I don't care if he does!" she cried.

The old people were horrified and flabbergasted.

"Better," exclaimed the old mother, "if she had suffocated when we laid her in the hole and covered the opening with old boards and dirt and goose-feathers!"

"Better she had never been born," cried the old father, "than not to care if a worthless loafer like Jules Pipelin were to eat her up!"

"You think too ill of us," said Jules, breaking into a laugh. "Spare yourselves all pain and anxiety. Even if Mimi thinks herself sick to death, I pronounce her out of danger. In short, we love each other, but I have come to say good-by forever. Take, Mimi, this paltry diamond ring in memory of me, and——"

"Hold on!" said the old father, and when he had examined the diamond in the ring, he said to Jules: "What's your hurry? A man ought not to hurry over his good-bys. And, furthermore, a diamond of this size would set a couple up in business."

"It is not always," said Pipelin, "that one hears wisdom from the mouths of babes and sucklings. Come, my dear people, will you hide Mimi in the cellar or will you advise her to accept a plain gold ring in addition to the one with the diamond?"

"Let's see it," said the old man.

It was twenty carats fine and very heavy.

"How I should love to see her eat with a silver fork from a porcelain plate!" said Pipelin wistfully. "And if she happened to marry me, that is one of the first things I should see her do."

"Mother," said the old man to his wife, "what do you think of all this?"

"Better and better," said the old woman, with a cackling like that of a whole poultry-yard. And, from that moment, they hardly let M. Jules Pipelin out of their sight until he was safely bound to Mimi by the sacred ties of matrimony.

They bought a dear little donkey, packed it with a load of good and useful things, and started for the Forest of Argonne, where they had announced that they would spend their honeymoon. They were gone ten days. When they came back, one of us said to Jules, "Well, my old, how did you pass the time?" and he answered, "Ask the donkey, my old."

That got to be their regular answer to everything.

"How do you make your money, my dear old?" they would say to Pipelin. And he would answer, "That, my very dear old, is a question which you would more properly address to the donkey."

Nobody in our village ever prospered half so fast as Pipelin and Mimi; and few grudged them their success. But it was a horrible example for the young. It is true that Mimi worked hard about her house and garden, as all our women do, but Pipelin never seemed to do a stroke. And he was always taking Mimi from her work to go on little honeymooning trips in the Forest of Argonne. They loved each other immensely. I have never seen but one husband and wife so eager even to touch each other.

Pipelin no longer made solitary trips to Paris; he took Mimi with him. And, just to heighten the romance of the thing, they used to pretend to the proprietor of the hotel where they stopped that they weren't married but were merely traveling together. They would come back smelling of perfume and tell us of theaters and dinners, of horse-races and boxing-matches, of great statesmen and generals whom they could have touched with their hands if they had wished to be so forward. And in the early night, if you passed by their house,



you could hear snatches of the newest songs on the oldest themes.

One day I was talking with a friend of mine, and she said,

"If I were a man, I'd hunt up the source of Jules Pipelin's wealth and get some of it."

"And where would you hunt?" I asked.

"Why, in the Forest of Argonne, ninny!" she answered. "With Pipelin and Mimi, a trip to the Forest is invariably followed by a trip to Paris, from which the return is gladdened by new clothes and ornaments and perfume. Do you know what I think?"

"No," I said; "but I believe I could find out for a penny."

"You could find out for less than that," said she, "if you had eyes in your head. That, however, is neither here nor there. I think that, somewhere in the Forest,

Pipelin has discovered some German paymaster's chest full of gold. More than one, perhaps. And, as I said before, if I were a man——"

"Fortunately," said I, "you are what you are. But if you weren't, you would——"

"I'd follow Pipelin on his next excursion. That's what I'd do."

"That," said I, "is because you don't know the Forest. Do you know that, from end to end and from side to side, it is one great graveyard? The dead lie cheek by jowl, French dead and Prussian dead. Some died of bullets, some of starvation; some died of being buried alive; others of being trampled on by retreating men and horses, others died of homesickness and despair. You cannot walk a dozen steps in the Forest without hearing the dry bones crack under your feet, without looking a skull in the eye-sockets."

"And what of it?" said my friend. "Do the skulls bite?"

"At night," I said, "the dead come out of their graves or out of the bushes where they lie unburied, and



I know that we stood looking at each other, and that I had one hand reached forward as if to touch her





groan and tell each other about their wounds."

"If Jules Pipelin faces that sort of thing, I should think you might."

"Ah, but Pipelin fought all through the Forest. He's one of them, you may say, though living. They wouldn't hurt him. He took the same chances that they did, Pipelin did, and they know it and respect him for it. It's different with me; I did garrison-duty in a fort and never even got shot at except once by a comrade who went mad, because of the inaction. So you see the dead don't know *me* from Adam. They don't know if I'm a good sort or not. And if this is not enough, Pipelin has Mimi. And it is well known that when two young people are really in love with each other, the dead leave them severely alone."

"So if you loved some one and were loved back, you wouldn't fear the Forest."

"I wouldn't fear hell. And I'd take that girl with me and follow Pipelin and find his treasure-chest and offer to share it with him."

"What a pity you *don't* love anyone, and *aren't* loved back!"

"We must follow them," whispered my wife. "We must follow them," said I. And my wife said: "We shall. Those two olds! And

At that moment, walking hand in hand and followed by their dear little donkey, and preceded by a strong smell of perfumery, along the street came Jules Pipelin and Mimi, his wife, heading for the Forest of Argonne. Pipelin carried a gun, Mimi a fishing-rod. They perceived us, where we stood among the bell-glasses, and Pipelin called out,

"Don't you wish *you* were married, good people, like us, and going on a jolly jaunt?"

And my friend shouted back,

"Don't ask me, Pipelin; ask the donkey."

"Which donkey?" said Pipelin, and that made his wife laugh so hard that she almost fell down. When they reached the turn of the street, Pipelin called back over his shoulder: "Well, farewell, my olds! Think it over!"

My friend gazed after the retreating pair with a certain wistfulness, and she said,

"There will be a full moon to-night."

Then she leaned over and lifted a heavy bell-jar to cover a family of baby lettuces.





"We mustn't let them get out  
shall learn their famous secret,  
make them fork up"

As she leaned, I noticed that in the seam which attaches a girl's sleeve to her blouse a number of stitches were lacking, so that I had a narrow peep of skin as soft, white, and smooth as milk. I cannot explain why, but that little glimpse of her that I had never had before moved me to a sudden melting tenderness and pity. She was no longer the strong, able, romping, merry girl that I had seen grow up, but an exquisite embodiment of all that is precious and delicate. I could have howled aloud to think that she might one day be old, gray, wrinkled, and broken with sorrow. She seemed to me, at that moment, a fragile, appealing little child in trouble—a thing infinitely to be protected. Standing there, leaning wearily after the long day, but courageously, and covering the baby lettuces for the night, she seemed to me like some princess in a fairy-tale whose body might easily be bruised by the falling petals of roses. Again she leaned, and then I spoke in a voice that was utterly strange to

us both, and she straightened up, immensely startled, and looked at me with round eyes full of wonder. I have never known what I said to her in the utterly strange voice. But I know that we stood looking at each other, and that I had one hand reached forward as if to touch her, as the sick reach out to touch the garment of the Pope. And I know that I trembled from head to foot, shaken equally by passion and compassion.

And she said, "Do you want me?"

And I said: "I want you! I want you!"

Then she said: "And I have always wanted you. And I would rather have you than the king of Spain or the president of France."

And I said: "I would go through the groaning Forest of Argonne, as through a field of flowers, merely to kiss dirt that had been under your feet."

Then our master called from the house,



"Why don't you get to work, you two, and finish covering up the baby lettuces for the night?"

And we answered: "Yes, sir, right away, sir; we were just going to."

But we whispered at our work, and touched hands now and then, and when all the baby lettuces were covered for the night, we gathered up the garden-tools and carried them to the dark tool-house that smelled of earth and tobacco and bone-meal, and then we made the discovery that until that moment our lives had been as nightmares to us, and that we had just waked up. And we discovered that of the millions of things there were to say we could say but one. And that, with the fleeting moments at our disposal, our first kiss took up too much time to permit of a second.

Then I took her to her house, holding her honest hand all the way, and then, giggling very much and simpering, as is customary at such times, we told her father and her mother all about ourselves, and received a pallid sort of blessing from them, and the gratuitous information that poverty gnaws the heart as a mouse gnaws cheese and that marriage is a lottery.

So as soon as we could get married, we got married. And the good old mayor of the village loaned us a dear little donkey, and we spent our honeymoon under the stars and the sun in the Forest of Argonne.

And that, I want to tell you, my dear olds, was *some* honeymoon!

## II

It seemed to us of much more moment that we two should be alive than that all those poor fellows should be dead. And sometimes I felt as if all the lost powers of love and tenderness of which those thousands and thousands of young hearts had been capable had returned from the stars and been gathered into my one breast.

We heard at night no ghostly groans—only a gentle murmuring of leaves, a lapping of water, the twittering of roosting birds, and, mayhap, now and then the beating of our own hearts. Waking, I have rested by the hour on one elbow to watch her placid, starlit face, and to listen to the music of her quiet breathing. And those were sweet hours. But sometimes I simply had to wake her, lest in sleep, which is so like

death, she should be ignorant of how much I loved her. To some persons in the deep sleep of night it is a torture to be wakened. But with her the transition was sudden and joyous like the lighting of a lantern, and she would say, her wide eyes laughing, "Well, my old, what is it?"

It is a long way from a peasant's blue blouse and a market-garden full of baby lettuces to a seat in the Academy of France and a ribbon of the Legion of Honor; but much may be done in this world by a man whose wife always wakes up smiling and says, "Well, my old, what is it?"

"What is it? It is only to tell you that I love you, lest, in the unconsciousness of sleep, you might have forgotten. It is only to tell you that, in all the starlight that there is upon the world, there is only the one face. It is only to tell you that you are my kingdom and my glory, and that your hands might be the better for a kiss apiece and your feet, too; that your hands and feet might be, by the merest modicum, the better, and my heart, by a great so much, the humbler and the more grateful."

Every morning she went to her bath in the river. Once I said,

"I would give my ears, my tongue—everything but my eyes, if I might, just once, be a pebble on the river-bank."

And she said, "Well, my old, why not?"

If Castile and both Americas belonged to me, I would freely give them sooner than that that first sight of her bathing in the golden brown pool of the river should be wiped from my mind. I only looked a little—such is worship. To have looked long would have been an act of desecration.

And then, one fine morning, we, who had forgotten all about them, beheld passing far off, at the end of a long forest glade, none other than Jules Pipelin, Mimi, his wife, and, trotting along behind them, their dear little donkey.

Pipelin shouldered a shovel, Mimi a pick.

Alas, my dear olds, the sordid-exciting thoughts of buried treasure for a moment almost crowded the love from our hearts! That we continued to hold hands is true enough. But it was no longer the most rapturous and important matter in the world. It was the beginning rather of a habit—a good habit.

"We must follow them," whispered my wife.





DRAWN BY JUDITH WILLIAMS

Mimi, white as death itself—give her credit for that—breathed from her bottle with short, heavy breaths; but she drew closer to Pipelin, and over his shoulder looked keenly into the dead man's open mouth



"We mustn't let them get out of our sight," said I.

And my wife said: "We shall learn their famous secret, we shall. Those two olds! And make them fork up."

Crack! It was the arm-bone of a man, that I had stepped on and broken. Had they heard? We stood a while very still, listening, our hearts beating very loudly like the hearts of conspirators or of little children who are called upon to recite in school for the first time. Then there was borne back to us through the Forest, first a whiff of eau de Cologne and then a sweet, quavering snatch of Pipelin's gay voice:

*"Gai, lon, là, gai le rosier du joli mois de mai."*

And we followed after them, guided now by snatches of song, now by the bursts of laughter, now by our own cleverness in seeing without being seen, and now by pure chance.

"Only think," said my wife, "it may be that we shall never have to put the baby lettuces to bed again!"

And it seemed to me, in those moments, that gold luckily and speedily acquired was more desirable than the opportunity, the health, and the pluck to do honest labor in the lap of God.

We were entering a part of the Forest of Argonne where the fighting had been very severe, where so many trees had been shot through and through, felled, and smashed, that it seemed a wonder any should remain standing, untouched, and umbrageous. Where so many bones lay bleaching, it seemed a wonder that one could walk without treading on them. For here the French and the Prussians had gone forward and back, and forward and back, and forward and back in the death-struggle—the dead and the wounded, the cannons and small arms falling from the armies like drops of sweat from the bodies of two gladiators. Here the trees lay upon each other like a problem in jackstraws; here was an excellent museum of arms. There are not in this world enough curiosity seekers to make an impression on the stores which have been scattered in the Forest of Argonne. One gets sick of picking up rifles and sabers, canteens, belt-buckles, metal letters, pistols, and bayonets.

Pipelin and Mimi were going through a little cut between two hills, and we were

above, looking down on them through a fringe of bushes. Suddenly Mimi stooped down and picked up a skull; Pipelin broke short off in the midst of a song, took the skull from her hands, examined it briefly and cast it from him with an expression of contempt. The skull lay fair in their path and, as she came up to it, Mimi paused and, with a heavy kick of her stout right shoe, broke it to pieces. It might have been the skull of a jackal or hyena for all the respect she showed it. She acted as if she were angry with that poor skull that had once contained human aspirations, passions, talents, tendernesses, perhaps, and a sense of decency.

We had to lose sight of them for a while or be seen ourselves. And here was where chance favored us, for there was a sudden cessation of all their laughing and singing; they passed over a rocky area upon which their feet left no mark, and it came to guessing as to which way they had gone. We guessed down-hill instead of up, which was the natural thing to do, all other considerations being even, and were rewarded, half an hour later, by the sound of a pick being worked in gravelly ground.

They were hard at work digging into the side of one of those funeral mounds with which the Forest of Argonne is so well and dismally furnished. But for the shade of one huge oak tree, the mound and the Pipelins were in the open. There was a curious thing about that oak—a great shell had passed clean through the trunk, so that you wondered why the top did not die and the tree fall. The tree seemed to be in a state of perfect equilibrium. I had the feeling that the slightest push with my hands would be enough to knock it down.

Pipelin was in his shirt-sleeves, picking away with immense energy, the sweat pouring from him. Mimi stood a little to one side, a tint paler than usual. She had in one hand a stumpy green-glass bottle with a glass stopper. It appeared to contain lumps of sugar submerged in a colorless liquor. As we looked, she pulled out the stopper, lifted the bottle to her nostrils, and drew in a deep, full breath.

It was at this moment that Pipelin dropped his pick, leaned into the opening which he had made, took a two-hand hold on what appeared to be a bundle of dirty old clothes, and began to jerk at it. The old



clothes and that which they contained came slowly and reluctantly.

The open forest floor, the sun and the rain, the ants and the flies, the crows and the rodents, heat and cold—these things are merciful to the dead. In the more equal condition of the grave, the transitions are slower and more horrible. That thing which Pipelin had in his hands was still a human head; that thing which he was silently wrenching open was still a human mouth. Mimi, white as death itself—give her credit for that—breathed from her bottle with short, heavy breaths; but she drew closer to Pipelin, and over his shoulder looked keenly into the dead man's open mouth.

It was at this moment that the old oak tree, shot through the trunk, cracked like a cannon-shot and fell over on them. I know not why, unless God had urged it to guard the dead in the mound.

Every leaf leaped and shook and was still. From under the huge green top there came, for a few moments, a kind of squealing such as a rat makes in the mouth of a terrier.

They were dead as stones, the two of

them—the two olds. It was I that found this out. My wife could not go near, because of the other corpse. As for me, I got away from that dreadful proximity as quickly as I could. And no one could have driven me back to it but my wife. She had noticed, slung from Pipelin's shoulders by a strap, a sack like those in which salt is sold, and, in the midst of all the horror, her woman's curiosity wanted to know what was in that sack. My dear olds, it contained several pounds of gold fillings dug from dead men's teeth! And we were both deathly sick at the stomach.

It is good to have labored with baby lettuces in the lap of the Lord; it is good to have prospered slowly and honestly.

Just one thing more: One day, my beloved was suddenly indisposed.

"What is the matter?" I cried. "Are you still thinking of Pipelin and Mimi and how they got rich?"

"No, I'm not," she said.

"Then what ails you?"

"My dear old," she said, and she was between panic and laughter, "I think you had better ask the donkey."

## Samuel Merwin

Author of the popular novels, "The Honey-Bee," "Anthony the Absolute," and "The Charmed Life of Miss Austin,"

will write **exclusively** for **Cosmopolitan** henceforth.

This brilliant young American novelist will make his appearance as an entertainer before his new public in **December Cosmopolitan** through the medium of the first of a series of short stories of New York life.

Mr. Merwin has coined a new word to fit a metropolitan type of human beings evolved by modernity.

"**Trufflers**" he calls them. They are hunters for delicacies—truffle-hunters—and they hunt selfishly and constantly. There are both he Trufflers and she Trufflers. Both seek emancipation from obligations and responsibilities. New York swarms with Trufflers.

They have been a fascinating study to Mr. Merwin, and now they have lent themselves as fascinatingly to his genius pen. A diverting group of Trufflers truffles through every episode of the series, but each episode is a complete short story. A splendid girl moves vitally among the Trufflers. You will want to know why she is there.

The first episode of *The Trufflers* will be *The Broadway Thing* (**December Cosmopolitan**).

A word concerning Mr. Merwin, not our own but that of the *Book News Monthly* (February, 1915):

"In Samuel Merwin we are approaching the long-desired result, the psychological novelist who reveals to us the hidden drama of the mind in the setting of an absorbing and even adventurous story."

So **Cosmopolitan** believes.



# THE MESSAGE

*By*  
*Elta Wheeler Wilcox*

*Decoration by W. T. Benda*

I HAVE not the gift of vision,  
I have not the psychic ear,  
And the realms that are called Elysian  
I neither see nor hear;  
Yet oft when the shadows darken  
And the daylight hides its face,  
The soul of me seems to hearken  
For the truths that speak through space.

They speak to me not through reason,  
They speak to me not by word;  
Yet my soul would be guilty of treason  
If it did not say it had heard.  
For Space has a message compelling  
To give to the ear of Earth;  
And the things which the Silence is telling  
In the bosom of God have birth.

Now this is the Truth as I hear it:  
That ever through good or ill,  
The will of the Ruling Spirit  
Is moving and ruling still.  
In the clutch of the blood-red terror  
That holds the world in its might,  
The Race is learning its error  
And will find its way to the light.

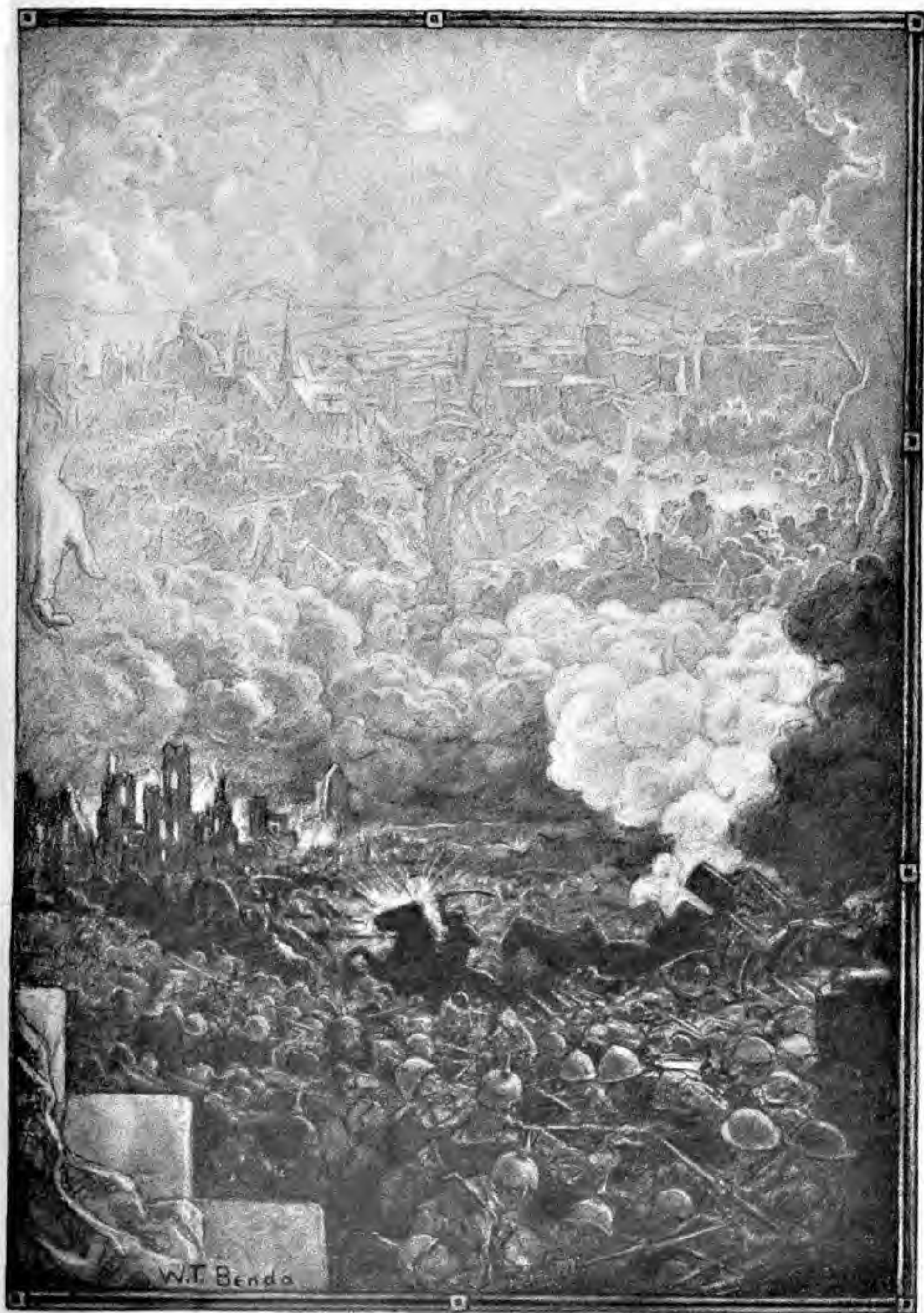
And this is the Truth as I see it:  
Whoever cries out for peace,  
Must think it, and live it, and be it,  
And the wars of the world will cease.  
Men fight that man may awaken,  
And no longer want to kill;  
Wars rage, and the heavens are shaken  
That man may learn how to be still.

Oh, slow are God's mills in the grinding,  
But they grind exceedingly small;  
And slow is man's soul in the finding  
That he is a part of the All.  
Through eons and eons his story  
Is bloody and blackened with crime;  
But he will come out into glory  
And stand on the summits sublime.

This is the Truth as I hear it:  
The clouds are rolling away,  
And Spirit will talk with Spirit  
In the swift-approaching day.  
War from the world shall be driven,  
From evil shall come forth good;  
And men shall make ready for heaven  
Through living in brotherhood.







W.T. Benda





# DEVILS

*By*

*Etta Wheeler Wilcox*

*Decoration by W. T. Benda*

GOD made man, and man made devils—  
All of earth's evils  
Are shaped and molded by mortal thought,  
Carelessly fashioned or carefully wrought,  
Life after life and time on time,  
Thought-forms grow into creatures of crime,  
Roaming about in the regions of Mind,  
Mischief to find.

Monstrous devils there are grown old  
Through ages untold—  
Devils old,  
With sins repeated and unrepented,  
Devils demented  
By their own passions and lusts and greeds  
Or by steady diets of moss-grown creeds,  
History tells how these devils would boil  
Their differing brothers in kettles of oil,  
And we know how the Maid of Orleans fared!  
Still, if they dared,  
Devils there are who would do it again,  
Stalking among us as sanctified men,  
Bleating aloud of their love for God,  
Yet using the rod  
Or the scourge on some brother whose faith seems  
Too broad.

Imps of jealousy, envy, and spite  
Grow into big devils, sometimes in a night—  
Big, black, red-eyed devils of war,  
Whom we all abhor.



There are feminine devils who must, I opine,  
Have been mermaids or fishes, when seaward the swine  
Ran over the cliffs and were drowned: but the legion  
Of devils was saved, for it found in that region  
Mermaids and jellyfish ready to give  
All the comforts of home and to help them to live.

Then into forms human  
Each came as a woman—  
Delilah and Jezebel, Lilith and all—  
Females who stand but that others may fall.  
And females who gossip and stir up strife  
And are thorns in the flesh of the neighborhood life.

But the worst type of all, of the many that roam  
Abroad in the land, is the devil at home—  
A narrow-souled mean little devil of self—

A petulant elf  
Who smiles on the street, but at his (or her) board  
Sits scowling or groaning or saying some word  
That hurts those who hear it—  
A mosquito-like spirit  
That keeps up a buzzing and maddening hum,  
And only is dumb  
While sinking its sting into somebody's heart.

Oh, this is the devil who plays a large part  
In the world everywhere: yet full often his voice  
(Or hers) in the churches is heard to rejoice  
Over certain salvation for those who "believe."  
Alas, you poor devils, you cannot deceive  
The God of the Universe. You will be driven  
Straight out of his heaven  
Back into the sea by the Christ as of old:  
And you will behold  
Your thoughts and your deeds coming back on yourself.  
You mean little petulant home-spoiling elf.

God made man and man made devils,  
But all earth's evils  
Will wear themselves out as the cycles roll.  
And nothing will live but the God in each soul







The whole region north of the estuary was little better than a steaming swamp, infested with poisonous snakes and insects, and with strange monsters, survivals from a still earlier age

# *The Lake of Long Sleep*

By Charles G. D. Roberts

*Illustrated by Paul Bransom*

**D**RIVEN from their homes beside the Bitter Water by a great migration of the beasts, the tribe of the Cave Folk had escaped on rafts across the broad river-estuary which washed the northern border of their domain. There they had found a breathing-space, but it had proved a brief one. The whole region north of the estuary was little better than a steaming swamp, infested with poisonous snakes and insects, and with strange monsters, survivals from a still earlier age, whose ferocity drove the Cave Folk back to their ancestral life in the tree-tops. Under these conditions, it was all but impossible to keep alight the sacred fires—as precious to the tribe as life itself—which they had brought with them in their flight upon the rafts. And Grôm, the chief, saw his harassed people in danger of sinking back into the degradation from which his discovery and conquest of fire had so wonderfully uplifted them.

From the top of a solitary jobo tree, which towered above the rank surrounding jungle, Grôm could make out what looked like a low bank of purple cloud along the western and northwestern horizon. As it was always there, whenever he climbed to look at it, he concluded that it was not a cloud-bank but a line of hills. Where there were hills, there might be caves. In any case, the People must have some better place to inhabit than this region of swamps and monsters. The way to that blue line of promise lay across what would surely be the path of the migrating beasts, if they should take it into their heads to swim across the river. The possibility was one from which even his resolute spirit shrank. But he felt that he must face any risk in the hope of winning his way to those cloudy hills. Within an hour of his reaching this decision, the tribe of the Cave Folk was once more on the march.

The first few days of the march were like a nightmare. Grôm led the way along the shore of the river, both because that seemed the shortest way to the hills and because, in case of emergency, the open water afforded a door of escape by raft. Had it been possible to make the journey by raft, matters would have been simplified; but Grôm had already proved by experience that his heavy, unwieldy rafts could not be forced upward against the mighty current of the river. At the last point to which the flood-tides would carry them, the rafts had been abandoned—herded together into a

quiet cove, and lashed to the shore by twisted vine ropes against some possible future need.

At the head of the dismal march went Grôm, with his mate, A-ya, and her two children, and a hairy little scout, Loob, whose feet were as quick as his eyes and ears and nostrils, and whose sinews were as untiring as those of the gray wolf. Immediately behind these came the main body of the warriors on a wide line, so as to guard against surprise on the flank. Then followed the women and children, bunched as closely as possible behind the center of the line, and a knot of picked warriors, under young Mô, the brother of A-ya, guarded the rear. Such of the young women as had no small children to carry bore the heavy burdens of the fire-baskets or bundles of smoke-dried meat, leaving the warriors free to use their bows and spears.

In traversing the swamp, the march was sometimes at ground-level, sometimes high in the tree-tops. In the tree-tops it was safer, but the progress was slow and laborious. At ground-level, the swarms of stinging insects were always with them till Grôm invented the use of smudges. When every alternate member of the tribe carried a torch of dry grass and half-green bark, the march was enveloped in a cloud of acrid smoke which the insects found more or less disconcerting.

Of the grave perils of this weary march to the hills, a single instance may suffice. The nights, as a rule, were passed by the whole tribe in the tree-tops, both for the greater security and because there was seldom enough dry ground to sleep upon. But one evening, toward sunset, they came upon a sort of little island in the reeking jungle. Its surface was four or five feet above the level of the swamp. The trees which dotted it were smooth, straight, towering shafts, with wide fans of foliage at their far-off tops. And the ground between these clean, symmetrical trunks was unencumbered, being clothed only with a rich, soft, spicy-scented herbage, akin to the thymes and mints. Such an opportunity for rest and refreshment was not to be let slip, and Grôm ordered an immediate halt.

A fat, piglike water-beast, of the nature of the dugong, had been speared that day in a bayou beside the line of march, and with great contentment the tribe settled themselves down to such a comfortable feasting as they had not known for many days. While the fat dugong was being



hacked to pieces and divided under the astute direction of A-ya, Grôm made haste to establish the camp-fires in a chain completely encircling the encampment, as a protection against night prowlers from the surrounding jungle. As darkness fell, the flames lit up the soaring trunks, but the roof of overarching foliage was so high that the smoky illumination was lost in it.

While the rest of the tribe gave itself up to the feasting, Grôm and Loob and half a dozen of the other warriors kept vigilant watch while they ate, distrusting the black depths of jungle and the deep, reed-fringed pools beyond the circle of light. Suddenly, all along one side of the island, there arose a sound of heavy splashing, and out of the darkness came a row of small, malignant eyes, all fixed upon the feasters. Then into the circle of light swam the masks of giant alligators and strange tusked caymans. Quite unawed by the fires, they came ashore with a clumsy rush, open-mouthed.

While the clamoring women snatched the children away to the other side of the encampment, Grôm and the other warriors hurled themselves upon the hideous invaders as they came waddling with amazing nimbleness in between the fires. But these were no assailants to be met with bow and spear. At Grôm's sharp orders, each warrior snatched a blazing brand from the fire and drove it into the gaping throat of his nearest assailant. In their stupid ferocity, the monsters invariably bit upon the brand before they realized its nature. Then, bellowing with pain, they wheeled about and scrambled back toward the water, lashing out with their gigantic tails so that three of the warriors were knocked over and half a dozen of the fires were scattered.

The feasters had hardly more than settled down after this startling visitation when, from the darkness inland, came a hoarse, hooting cry, followed by a succession of crashing thuds, as if a pair of mammoths were playing leap-frog in the jungle. All the men sprang again to their weapons, and stood waiting in a sudden hush, straining their eyes into the perilous dark. Some of the women herded the children into the very center of the island, while others fed the fires with feverish haste. The hooting call and the heavy, leaping thuds came nearer and nearer at a terrifying speed, and suddenly amid the far-off, vaguely lighted tangle of the tree-trunks appeared a giant form, seven or eight times the height of Grôm himself. Leaping upon its mighty hind legs, and holding its mailed fore paws before its chest, it came bounding like a colossal kangaroo through the jungle, smashing down the branches and smaller trees as it came, and balancing itself at each spring with its massive reptilian tail. Its vast head, something like a cross between that of a monstrous horse and that of an alligator, was upborne upon a long, snaky neck, and its eyes, huge and round and lidless, were like two disks of shining, enameled metal where they caught the flash of the camp-fires.

This appalling shape had apparently no dread whatever of the flames. When it was within some thirty or forty yards of the line of fire, Grôm yelled an order, and a swarm of arrows darted from their bows to meet it. But they fell futile from its armored hide, which gleamed like dull bronze in the firelight. Grôm shouted again, and this time the warriors hurled their spears—and they, too, fell harmless from the monster's armor. Its next crashing bound brought the monster to the edge of the encampment, where one of its ponderous feet obliterated a fire. With a lightning swoop of its gigantic head, it seized the nearest warrior in its jaws and swung him, screaming, high into the air, as a heron might snatch up a sprawling frog. At the same instant, A-ya, who was the one unerring archer in the tribe, let fly an arrow which pierced full half its length into the center of one of those horrifying enameled eyes; while Grôm, who alone of all the warriors had not recoiled in terror, succeeded in driving a spear deep into the unarmored inner side of the monster's thigh. But both these wounds, dreadful though they were, failed to make the colossus drop its prey. With mighty braying noises through its nostrils, it brushed the

spear-shaft from its hold like a straw, flopped about, and, with the arrow still sticking in its eye, went leaping off again into the darkness to devour its victim.

For several hours, with the fires trebled in number and stirred to fiercer heat, the tribe waited for the monster to return and claim another victim. But it did not return. At length, Grôm concluded that his spear-head in its groin and A-ya's arrow in its eye had given it something else to think of. Once more he set the guards, and gradually the tribe, inured to horrors, settled itself down to sleep. It slept out the rest of the night without disturbance, but the following night and the next two nights thereafter were spent in the tree-tops. Then, on the fourth day, the harassed travelers emerged from the swamp into a pleasant region of grassy, mimosa-dotted, gently rolling plain. The hills, now showing green and richly wooded, were not more than a day's march ahead.

And just here, as the Fates, which had, of late, been pursuing them would have it, the worn travelers found themselves once more in the line of the hordes of migrating beasts.

Grôm's heart sank. To reach the refuge of the hills across the march of those maddened hordes was obviously impossible. Were his people to be forced back into the swamp, to resume the cramped and apelike life among the branches? Having ordered the building of a half-circle of fire round a spur of the jungle, he climbed a tree to reconnoiter.

The river ran but a mile or two distant upon his left. Immediately before him, the fleeing beasts were not numerous, consisting merely of small herds and terrified stragglers. Farther out, however, toward the hills, the plain was blackened by the fugitives, who were thrust on by the myriads swimming the river behind them. Assuredly, it was not to be thought of that he should attempt to lead his people across the path of that desperate flight. But a point that Grôm noted with relief was that only certain kinds of beasts had ventured the crossing of the river. He saw no bears, lions, or sabertooths among those streaming hordes. He saw deer of every kind—good swimmers, all of them—with immense, rolling herds of buffaloes and aurochs, scattered companies of the terrible siva moose, and some bands of the giant elk, their antlers topping the mimosa thickets. Here and there, lumbering along sullenly, as if reluctant to retreat before any peril, journeyed a huge rhinoceros, stopping from time to time for a few hurried mouthfuls of the rich plains-grass. But as yet there was not a mammoth in sight—whereat Grôm wondered, as he thought they would have been among the first to dare the crossing of the river. Had they kept on up the other shore, hesitating to trust their colossal bulks to the current, or had they turned at bay, at last, in uncontrollable indignation, and gone down before the countless hordes of their assailants?

The absence of the mammoths, which he dreaded more than all the other beasts because of the fierce intelligence that gleamed in their eyes, decided Grôm. He would lead his people along to the right, skirting the swamp and marching parallel to the flight of the beasts, calculating thus to have the jungle always for a refuge—though not for a dwelling—until they should come once more to a region of hills and caves too difficult for the migrating beasts to traverse.

For several days, this plan answered to a marvel. The fugitives nearest to the swamp-edge were mostly deer of various species, which swerved away nervously from the line of march, but at the same time afforded such good hunting that the travelers reveled in abundance and rapidly recovered their spirits. Once, when a great wave of maddened buffaloes surged over upon them, the whole tribe fled back into the jungle, clambering into the trees and stabbing down, with angry shouts, at the nearest of their assailants. But the assault was a blind one. The buffaloes, a black mass that seemed to foam with tossing horns and rolling eyes, soon passed on to their unknown destination. And the tribe, dropping down from the branches, quite cheerfully resumed its march.



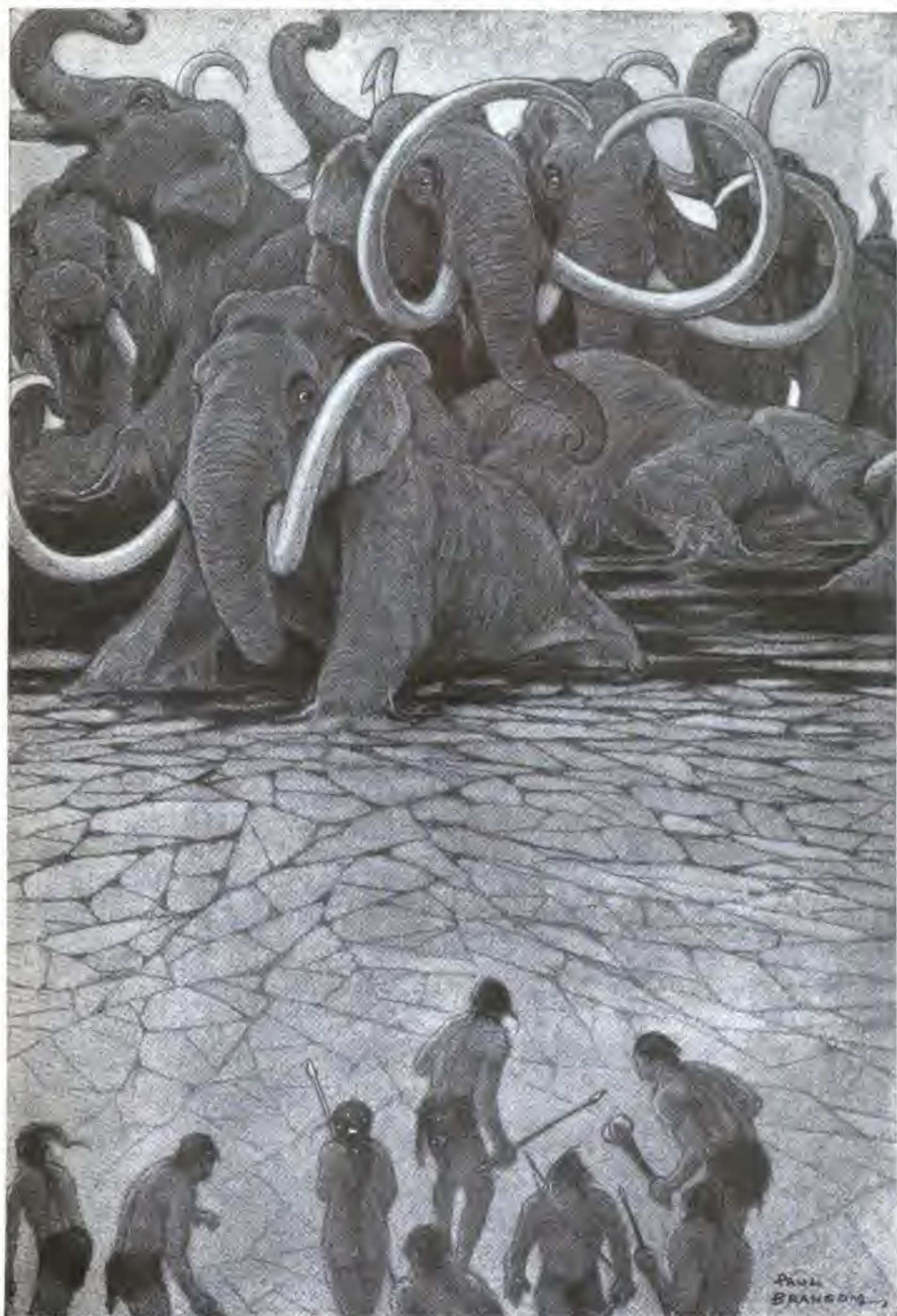


ILLUSTRATION BY PAUL BRANSON

The next moment, the treacherous crust crumbled away between them like an egg-shell, and, with screams that tore the heavens, they sank into the gulf of pitch





In the tree-tops it was safer, but the progress was slow and laborious

On the fifth day of the march, they saw the jungle on their right come to an end. It was succeeded by a vast expanse of shallow mere, dotted with half-drowned, rushy islets and swarming with crocodiles. After some hesitation, Grôm decided to go on, though he was uneasy about forsaking the refuge of the trees. Some leagues ahead, however, and a little toward the left, he could see a low, thick-wooded hill, which he thought might serve the tribe for a shelter. With many misgivings, he led the way directly toward it, swerving out across the path of a vast but straggling horde of sambur deer, which seemed almost exhausted.

To Grôm's surprise, these stately and beautiful animals showed neither hostility nor fear toward human beings. According to all his previous experience, the attitude of every beast toward man was one of fear or fierce hate. These sambur, on the contrary, seemed rather to welcome the companionship of the tribe, as if looking to it for some

protection against the strange pursuing peril. His sleepless sagacity perceiving the value of this great escort as a buffer against the contact of less kindly hordes, Grôm gave strict orders that none of these beasts should be molested. And the Cave Folk, not without apprehension, found themselves traveling in the vanguard of an army of tall, high-antlered beasts, which stared at them with mild eyes of inquiry and appeal.

Marching at their best speed, the tribe kept easily in the van of the distressed sambur, and more than once, in the next few hours, Grôm had reason to congratulate himself upon his venture into this strange fellowship. First, for instance, he saw a herd of black buffaloes overtake the sambur host and dash heavily into its rear ranks. The frightened sambur closed up instead of scattering, and the impetus of the buffaloes presently spent itself upon the unresisting mass. They edged their way through to the left, leaving swathes of gored and trodden sambur in their wake, and went thundering off on another line of retreat, caroming into a herd of aurochs, which fought them off and punished them murderously. It was obvious to Grôm, as he studied the dust clouds of this last encounter, that the buffalo herd, here in the open, would have rolled over the tribe irresistibly and trampled it flat.

Journeying thus at top speed toward that hill of promise before them, the travelers came at length to a wide space of absolutely level ground which presented a most curious appearance. It was as level as a windless lake, and almost without vegetation. The naked surface was of a sort of indeterminate dust-color, but dotted here and there with tiny patches of vegetation, so stunted that it was little more than moss. Grôm, with his inquiring mind, would have liked to stop to investigate this curious surface, unlike anything he had ever seen before. But the hordes of the sambur were behind, pressing the tribe onward, and straight ahead was the wooded hill, dense with foliage, luring with its promise of safe and convenient shelter. He led the way, therefore, without hesitation, out across the baked and barren waste, sniffing curiously as he went at a strange smell, pungent but not unpleasant, which steamed up from the dry, hot surface all about him.

The first peculiarity that he noticed was a remarkable springiness in the surface upon which he trod. Then he was struck by the fact that the dust-brown surface was seamed and crisscrossed in many places by small cracks—like those in sun-scorched mud—except that the cracks were almost black in color. These things caused him no misgivings. But presently, to his consternation, he detected a slight but amazing undulation, an immensely long, immensely slow wave rolling across the dry surface before him. He could hardly believe his eyes, for assuredly nothing could look more like good solid land than that stretch of barren plain. He stopped short, rubbing his eyes in wonder. A-ya grabbed him by the arm.

"What is it?" she whispered, staring at the unstable surface in a kind of horror.

Before he could reply, cries and shouts arose among the tribe behind him, and they all rushed forward, almost sweeping Grôm and A-ya from their feet.

The surface of the plain, all along the edge of the grass-



land, had given way beneath the weight of the sambur herds, and the front ranks were being engulfed, with frantic snortings and awful groans, in what looked like a dense, blackish, glistening ooze. The ranks behind were being forced forward to this awful doom, in spite of their panic-stricken struggles to hold back; and it was the pressure of this battling mass that was creating the horrible, bulging undulation on the plain.

Grôm's quick intelligence took in the situation on the instant. The naked brown surface beneath the feet of the tribe was nothing more than a thin crust overlying a lake of some dense, dark, strange-smelling liquid.

His first impulse, naturally, was to turn back, and A-ya, with wide eyes of terror, was already dragging fiercely at his elbow. But to turn back was utterly impossible. That way lay the long strip of engulfing pitch, swallowing up insatiably the ranks of the groaning and kicking sambur. There was but one possible way of escape left open, and that was straight ahead.

But would the crust continue to uphold them? Already, under the weight of the whole tribe pressing together, it was beginning to sag hideously. With furious words and blows, Grôm tried to make the tribe scatter to right and left, so as to spread the pressure as widely as possible. Perceiving his purpose, A-ya and Loob and several of the leading warriors seconded his efforts with frantic vehemence till, in a few minutes, the whole tribe, amazed and quaking with awe, was extended like a fan over a front of three or four hundred yards. Seeing that the perilous sagging of the crust was at once relieved, Grôm then ordered the tribe to advance cautiously, keeping the same wide-open formation while he himself brought up the rear.

But, in a few minutes, everyone, from Grôm downward, came to a halt irresistibly, in order to watch the monstrous drama unfolding behind them.

For nearly half a mile on either side of their immediate rear, between the still unbroken surface of the dust-brown expanse and the edge of the trampled

grassy plain, stretched a sort of canal, perhaps ten paces wide, of brown-black, glistening pitch, beaten up with thrashing antlers and tossing heads that whistled despairingly through wide nostrils, and heaving, agonizing bulks that went down slowly to their doom. After several ranks of the herd had been engulfed, those next behind turned about in terror and fought madly to force their way back from the fatal brink. But the inexorable masses behind them rolled them on backward, and slowly they, too, were thrust down into the pitch, till the canal was filled to the brink and writhed horribly along its whole length. By this time, however, the alarm had spread through the rest of the sambur ranks. By a desperate (Continued on page 116)



It seized the nearest warrior in its jaws and swung him, screaming, high into the air, as a heron might snatch up a sprawling frog





## Get Rid of That Bunion!

Dr. Scholl's **Ton Flex** permanently corrects bunions by straightening the crooked or cramped toe. It is a practical, antiseptic rubber device worn comfortably in any shoe. Will soon restore toe and joint to normal position. Three sizes, 50 cents each.

Whether you suffer from bunions, fallen arches, weak ankles, painful corns or burning calluses—you can be comfortable. For there is a Dr. Scholl's Appliance for every foot trouble.

## Dr. Scholl's Foot Comfort Appliances

The best shoe dealer in your town sells Dr. Scholl's Foot Comfort Appliances. He has been trained in Fructipolles, the science of giving foot comfort, and deserves your patronage, for he is rendering a distinct service to your community.

### Send for Free Booklet

"Feet and Their Care," by Dr. Wm. M. Scholl, the recognized authority on all foot troubles, sent free on request.

If your dealer will not supply you, write direct to Dr. Scholl for free advice.

**THE SCHOLL MFG. CO.**

215K Schiller St.

Chicago, Ill.

WATCH YOUR FEET

## Success with Flowers



### RED SNAPPER Plant Food

MARVELOUS growth of house plants, garden flowers, vines and shrubbery, can be obtained by using RED SNAPPER Plant Food from the start. It can be incorporated with the soil or mixed with the water. The foliage takes on a darker shade and the flowers a brighter coloring; the admiration of all who see them. Weak, scraggly plants are worse than none at all. Absolute success is certain when RED SNAPPER Plant Food is used. It is the richest, most nutritious and effective fertilizer ever put on the market. It is one of the most potent but not actual food. Sold in large 2-lb. cans at 50¢ and 1-lb. 25¢ each at all grocers, florists, and drug stores. Ask your dealer. If he does not keep it, send 25 cents for trial package and we will also include our flower book entitled "HOUSE PLANTS AND FLOWER GARDENS—Their Care and Culture."

DEALERS—Write for Introductory Proposition.

**National Plant Food Co., Dept. 27**

General Office, San Diego, Cal. Factory, Pomona, Cal.

## Effecto AUTO FINISHES



## PAINT YOUR OWN CAR!

Not a mark or scratch, but a durable, quick-drying, light-colored finish that you can use yourself. Made by chemists, sold by paint, hardware and accessory dealers. For latest color card, Pratt & Lambert Inc., 110 Broadway, New York, N.Y. In Canada, 95 Queen St. W., Toronto, Ontario. **MADE BY THE MAKERS OF PRATT & LAMBERT VARNISHES**

The pantry is brimming with cakes and creams  
For Somebody's birthday ball.  
Papa and mama bring their gifts,  
But their love is better than all.  
Ribbons and sashes and dainty robes,  
Gifts of silver and gold  
Will fade and rust as the days go by,  
But their hearts will not grow cold.

Then laugh in the sunlight, Somebody Sweet,  
Little flower of June;  
You have nothing to do with care,

The next instalment of *The World and I* will appear in *July Cosmopolitan*.

## The Art of Robert W. Chambers

(Concluded from page 81)

for intellect, which enjoys the roses only after they are bald of petals, the noons after they have degenerated into drizzling Sunday evenings, and the creams after they have been turned into moldy cheeses.

Charm is not merely one of Robert W. Chambers' most constant themes but it is one of his own most inalienable qualities. Of course, everybody who knows the man himself loves him. I have never heard any man who knew him speak of him except with affection. Bob Chambers is the salt of the earth.

He is shy to the point of obscurity. He is the least photographed, least press-agented, least posy successful author in the world, I do believe.

The only ugly, obstinate, heartless things I have ever known him to do have been to rebuff interviewers' insult photographers, snub publicists' letters, and leave admirers flat, and bouquets undelivered.

His vices are interest in all nature-lore, with and profound specialization in butterflies, and also in rugs and military equipment. He has a love of research, and has written a monograph on a Colonial worthy that is professional in its outrageous thoroughness and accuracy.

He works hard and earnestly. And it takes as much earnestness to compose a successful short story of radiant warmth or a novel filled with accurately dressed and realistically managed swells as it does to heap miseries on an old maid in a back street or on a young wanton in a side street, or to squeeze all human disease, disappointment, dirt, despair, and distraction into a ruthless chronicle of life's mistakes.

The style is the man in Chambers'

For life is in perfect tune.  
Loving hearts and sheltering arms  
Shall keep old care away  
For many a year from Somebody Sweet,  
Who is three years old to-day.

Only a few years before the war I was in Paris and spent a happy evening with "Somebody Sweet," where she lived with her fine husband and interesting family of five boys, which included sturdy twins.

case as elsewhere. He does not run about the world shaking his fist at the sky or spitting in other people's faces. He loves mankind, animal-kind, and sky and sea and woods. There is an eternal summer in his heart. The world is his rose garden. His melancholies are wholesome, normal despondencies. He has written a few masterpieces of gruesome fiction, but they were triumphs of art, not secretions of poison.

He has written with astounding versatility from "The King in Yellow" to "A King and a Few Dukes"; from that superb fantasy, "The Maker of Moons," to that thrilling drama, "The Red Republic"; from that flower of joy, "Iole," to that fierce social document, "The Fighting Chance"; from the harrowing pity of the "Danger Mark" to the perplexities of "The Restless Sex." He has juggled with biological, entomological, paleontological, astrological plots, mystery stories, breathless adventures of women spies in the Civil War, of a nun and of Philippa in this world-war, of fascinating millionaire orphans raised by a trust company, of flat-dwellers in cities out camping, of expert out-of-door men and women out of doors, of city people in the cities and in their palatial ruralities, of almost everybody almost everywhere.

The reader who takes up one of his novels is well advised, for he never knows how it will begin, what will happen on any next page, or how it will end; he only knows that it has been written with expert skill, with a determined eagerness for beauty, color, vivacity, variety, and charm, and that it is the honest effort of a brilliant artist to portray in words the world and its people and their moods as his loving fancy sees them.

## The Lake of Long Sleep

(Continued from page 73)

effort, they got themselves turned, and went surging off to the left in a direction parallel to the edge of the plain of death.

Thrilled with the wonder and the horror of it, Gröm drew a deep breath and relaxed the tension of his watching. He was just about to turn and order the tribe forward again when he was arrested by the sight of a vast cloud of dust rolling up swiftly upon the left flank of the retreating sambur.

A confused cry of alarm went up from the watching tribe as they saw a forest of waving trunks appear in the front of the dust cloud. A second or two more, and a long array of mammoths emerged along

the path of the cloud. Among the mammoths, here and there, raced a black or a white rhinoceros or a towering, spotted giraffe.

Behind this front rank, vague and portentous through the veiling cloud, came further colossal hordes, filling the distance as far as eye could see.

This advance looked as if nothing on earth, not even the lake of pitch, could ever stop it, and certain of the tribe started to flee.

But Gröm, after a moment of misgiving and hasty calculation, checked the flight sternly. He must, at all risks, see





## If this happened to you would your brakes hold? *Failure even once may cause disaster*

**T**HE most watchful driving is of no avail unless your brakes obey instantly. When you apply your brakes do they respond smoothly, quickly and surely? In city traffic, on hills, or in emergencies your safety and peace of mind depend on the efficiency of your brakes. Ninety-nine successful operations count for nothing if they fail the hundredth time. It is easy to know always the condition of your brakes. Simply ask your garage man to inspect them regularly.

If they need relining have him put on Thermoid Brake Lining. It will give certain safety for the longest time for three reasons.

1. **More material, greater service.** There is over 40% more material and 60% more labor used in the manufacture of Thermoid Brake Lining than in any woven brake lining.
2. **Grapnelized**—an exclusive process which creates resistance to moisture, oil and gasoline.
3. **Hydraulic compressed, uniform throughout.** Every square inch of Thermoid is hydraulic compressed at a pressure of 2000 pounds. Have your dealer inspect your brakes today. He will show you Thermoid Brake Lining that you may see why it is so different, so efficient and long wearing. If he hasn't Thermoid we will gladly send you a sample. Our guarantee: *Thermoid will make good—or WE WILL.*

### Thermoid Rubber Company

Factory and Main Offices: Trenton, N. J.

**Branches:**  
New York      Chicago      San Francisco  
Indianapolis      Detroit      Los Angeles  
Philadelphia      Pittsburgh      Boston  
London      Turin      Paris

**Canadian Distributors:**

The Canadian Fairbanks-Morse Company, Limited, Montreal. Branches in all principal Canadian cities.



Makers of "Thermoid Crolide Compound Casings" and "Thermoid Garden Hose."

© Thermoid Rubber Co., 1918

### Brake Inspection Movement

Prominent officials, leading clubs and organizations and motorists everywhere have endorsed this big national movement to reduce automobile accidents, by having all brakes inspected before the touring season begins, and regularly thereafter.

Give it your support.



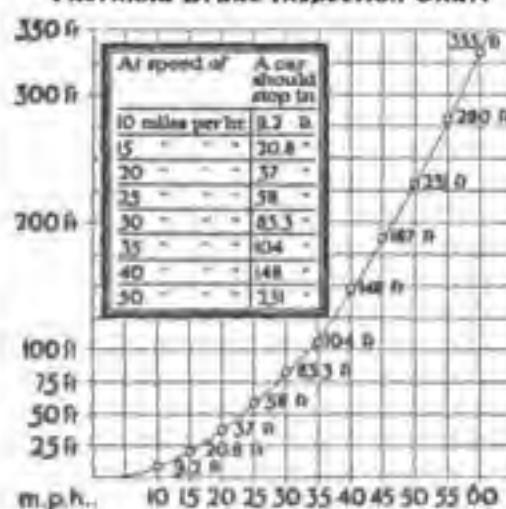
Will your car do this?

Automobile engineers have proved that when brake mechanism is right and road conditions average, any car should stop at distances and speeds given by the chart.

V<sup>2</sup> means the square of the velocity or speed of your car. 10.8 is the proved factor of retardation under average road conditions. This factor decreases on smooth, slippery roads to 6.7 and increases as high as 17.4 on rough, worn roads. The chart represents the average condition and other conditions can readily be figured by changing the factor within the given limits.

Remember that your brake mechanism is not "right" unless its brake lining has the ideal coefficient of friction. The better the brake lining the quicker your stop.

### Thermoid Brake Inspection Chart



the incredible thing that was about to happen. And he felt certain that, at this distance, out upon the crust of the gulf, the tribe would be secure.

The stupendous wave of dust and waving trunks and galloping black bulks thundered up at a terrific pace, and fell with irresistible impact upon the flank of the marching sambur.

These unhappy beasts went down like grass before it. They were rolled flat, trodden out like a fire in thin grass, annihilated. And the screaming, trumpeting monsters, hardly aware that there had been an obstacle in their path, arrived at the edge of the canal.

Here and there, an old bull, leading, took alarm, trumpeting wildly, and strove to stop. But the belt of pitch was full to the brink with the packed bodies of the sambur, and did not look to be a very serious barrier to the spacious brown levels beyond it.

Moreover, the panic of a long flight was upon them, and the rear ranks were thrusting them on. The trumpeting leaders were overborne in a twinkling. The ponderous feet of the front rank sank into the mass of bodies and horns and pitch, stumbled forward, belly-deep, and strove to clamber out upon the solid-looking farther edge. With trunks eagerly outstretched as if seeking to grip something, the huge, bat-eared heads heaved themselves up. The next moment, the treacherous crust crumbled away beneath them like an egg-shell, and, with screams that tore the heavens, they sank into the gulf of pitch. The next two or three ranks went on over them, trod them deeper down, heaved and surged and battled for some moments along the edge of the crumbling crust. With mad trumpeting, they were themselves swallowed up in that sluggish, implacable flood.

Here and there, a black trunk, twisting in anguish, lingered long, awful moments above the surface. Here and there, the pallid head of a giraffe, eyes bursting from their sockets and tongue protruding, stood up rigid on its long neck and screamed horribly.

As the thick tide closed slowly, slowly over its prey, the hosts in the rear, having taken alarm at the agonized trumpeting, succeeded, by a gigantic effort, in checking their career. Those nearest the edge of doom reared up and fell back upon those next behind, to be ripped with frantic tusks in the mad confusion. But presently the whole colossal array brought itself to a halt, got itself turned to the left, and went thundering off on the trail of the sambur remnant.

Grôm stood staring for a long time, with wide, brooding eyes, at the still bubbling and heaving breadths of dark pitch. He was stunned by the sudden engulfing and utter disappearance of such a monstrous horde. He seemed to see the countless gigantic shapes heaped one upon the other, laid to their long sleep there in the deeps of the pitch.

At last, he shook himself, passed his shaggy hand over his eyes, and shouted to the tribe that all was well. Then he set himself once more at their head, and led them, slowly and cautiously, onward across the dreadful level, till they gained the shelter of that sweetly wooded and rivulet-watered hill.



"EVEN as Ziff was telling me, and I was groping round in the dark for my trousers, I thought of the Forbidden Valley as the best place to hide in until the captain of the Susan B. Cushing had given up all hope of finding me and had squared his vessel for the open sea.

"At the same time, nobody had ever returned from the Forbidden Valley, and it had a dark name. Only the fear of death and of being eaten after death, or the fear of being put back into the fore-castle of a whaler could screw a man's courage up to the pitch of visiting the place.

"I didn't tell Ziff where I was going. His first impulse had been to warn me of my danger; his second might very well be to betray me, for the sake of the reward which Captain Coffin had offered.

"And I didn't tell the girl who, ever since I came ashore, had been taking care of me. All day, the blows of Aola's tapa-mallet had sounded musically in the palm grove before our hut, and after supper she had curled up like a tired kitten and fallen into a dreamless, soundless sleep. I had a look at her, though, before I stepped out into the perfumed night, and a lovely creature she was by the glimmer of the struck match—a black-haired maiden of a deep honey-color, touched here and there with vermillion. Where her eyes would find them when she waked at dawn, I placed the half of my matches, all my money (nearly two dollars in copper and silver—an island fortune), and my ditty-bag, with its needles, thread, thimble, and much grooved lump of beeswax.

"And then such an anguish of impending and perhaps final separation went aching through me that I nearly waked her. But, though she returned my kiss and her eyes may have half opened for a moment, she did not actually waken. And I had shaken hands with Ziff and thanked him, and was alone, hurrying through a grove of coco-palms, whose hairy stems were white in the light of the great tropic stars.

"Narrow ridges, evenly spaced like the spokes of a wheel, rose with a sharp inclination from the forest levels near the sea, and were as green buttresses to the towering black peak of the island's one (and unclimbed) volcano. By these ridges, the island was divided into five triangular valleys, three of which supported as many tribes of loafing, water-delighting Polynesians. Of the remaining two, one, having a soil inhospitable to the breadfruit tree (that combined butcher shop, grocery store, and dairy of the South Seas), was consequently uninhabited, and the other, of course, was that which they called the 'Forbidden Valley.'

"Tradition had it that, at various times, persons, aggregating some dozens in number, had, for one reason or another, taken refuge in the Forbidden Valley. But tradition could not recall that any of them had ever returned to the safe and unmysterious places of the island. It was, in short, a good valley to talk about and to avoid.



"I could see the outlying hut in which I had lived with Aola, and breast and grieved at my departure, or if she went, with

"Dawn found me astride of one of the ridges, half-way to the old volcanic cone, and I might very well have descended into the valley adjoining the one from which I had climbed during the night, and supported myself in idleness until the departure of the Susan B. Cushing with her bullying captain, but the mystery of the Forbidden Valley drew me as a magnet draws an iron filing. I could not understand how it could be a place from which there was no possibility of return. And, not understanding, I was not more than half afraid. A normal man does not believe in death until he is forty. I was twenty-two.

"Seated astride of the narrowed ridge, I could see, far off and far below, the smoke of the settlement from which I had fled, and beyond, floating like a duck upon the still waters of the harbor, the dark hull and the heavy spars of the Susan B. Cushing. But she looked no bigger than the boats which you make with your knife for a child. And I was glad I had brought the field-glasses. Swung from my shoulder by a leather strap, they had been a swinging, bumping nuisance during the hard climb, but now, focused and bringing closer those things of which I had so lately been a part, they were a pleasure and a comfort. On the ship and in the village no one was yet astir, but I could see the outlying hut in which I had lived with Aola, and if she had come to the door, I could have seen if she beat



# An Immortal

By Gouverneur Morris

Illustrated by George Gibbs

curve of the hub, from one spoke of a wheel to another.

"In this way, but not until late afternoon of the second day, I came to the third ridge and had my first look into the Forbidden Valley. But, save that it was narrower all the way to the sea and had steeper sides, it was almost disappointingly like the other valleys into which I had looked from their boundary-ridges. It was but a long and narrow trough of undulating, bright-colored green, from which there rose a sound of falling waters.

"Water that oozed from a thousand cracks in the dark volcanic cliffs joined forces here and there and became a hundred tiny falls; and these, in turn, half a thousand feet below, became three heavy falls, from whose bold and long plunge

downward rose a rainbowed mist and a roaring. A thousand feet below—though, because of sagging tree-tops, I could not see this from my present aerie—these three strong streams became one and dropped a sheer three hundred feet more into a gorge wet as a rain-storm and cold as an ice-box, and then, brown and sharply muscled like an athlete, rushed off slantwise toward the lower levels of the valley.

"The line of my descent skirted this fine and typical generation of an island river, and, even to a whaler accustomed to the jerking heights of a ship's upper courses, presented considerable difficulties and anxieties, and once, a stone coming loose under my hand, I slipped down a sharp and rotten slope and was saved from going over a precipice by the slender stem of a tree. And once I had to risk my leg-bones in a sheer drop of fifteen feet. But the last fifty feet of the cliff was a tangle of strong vines, and among these I was as safe as in the rigging of the Susan B. Cushing.

"I followed the river until night, and, after eating half my remaining food, pulled a mass of leaves to lie on and to cover me, and dampedly slept till daylight.

"Then followed a fight, which lasted for many miles, against enemy masses of hickory, tough and sometimes thorn-armed bushes, and it was high noon before I had won through to a fine stretch of tropic forest almost free from undergrowth. My trousers were in ribbons; my coat of tropic tan was torn and scratched, and I was tired nearly to death. And, to make matters worse, I could not, in that land of plenty, find anything to eat.

"Then, quite suddenly, I found that I was crossing a narrow but well-beaten trail. In which direction I had



if she had come to the door, I could have seen if she beat her water-delighting cheerfulness, about the business of the day"

her breast and grieved at my departure, or if she went, with water-delighting cheerfulness, about the business of the day.

"But the sun was growing hot, and though I wished very much to see her honey-colored face once more, I rose, swung the glasses over my shoulder, and went on.

"Aola might have admired my appearance, but, to the civilized eye, I must have seemed a figure of fun. The top of my head, thrust through the split midrib of a large breadfruit leaf, was exposed to the sun, but the flapping, scalloped edges of the leaf itself shaded my eyes and the top knobs of my spine from the dangerous rays. Below the waist, I had an old and tarry pair of canvas trousers, and, upon sockless feet, a pair of light canvas shoes. Above the waist, save for the field-glasses, I had nothing but a fine coat of tropic tan, embellished in front by a boldly colored eagle perched upon a striped shield. Now in one hand and now in the other, I carried a mottled red-cotton cloth handkerchief that contained matches in a bit of oilskin, a little prepared breadfruit, tobacco, and an old pipe. I had in my trousers' pockets a clasp-knife, a cheap watch, and a largish pearl of good orient.

"I came to the end of the ridge, some thousands of feet above sea-level, and began to pick my way along the crumbling and precipitous sides of the volcano toward the beginning of the next ridge, much as a fly might crawl, over the



better follow it was, of course, guesswork, and, after a brief hesitation, I turned to the right.

"The forest became more open, the undergrowth more floriferous; the change of landscape was from mystery and sullenness to charm and gaiety. Tired and hungry as I was, I carried a heart which became continually lighter, and then, suddenly, the path ended in a wide, hard beach of yellow sand, which surrounded a miracle of sky-colored water.

"It was a fountain rather than a pool, for, owing to subterranean springs, the center was raised like the loss of a shield, down whose sides the up-shot water flowed with a serene bubbling. And, indeed, all the waters of this fountain—it was perhaps a hundred feet across—were in a state of gentle unrest. They sparkled like charged waters; they were as if eternally renewed and revived. But the place had no outlet.

"The circle of firm sand was nowhere broken save by the luscious shadows of trees that were heavy with white and red and yellow fruit, and by the shadows of other trees gorgeous with flowers.

"And such flowers and such fruit! In a brief survey, I saw no traces of imperfection, of withering or decay. It was as if I had arrived at an hour chosen by nature herself to exhibit her resources.

"When I stripped and went into the water, I was a man nearly broken with fatigue, smarting from a hundred scratches and aching from falls and strains. A little later, when I came out and sat in the sunlight, slowly drying and slowly munching strange and nectareous fruits, I realized suddenly that I no longer seemed to have a care in the world.

"A little back from the fountain I found, aimlessly wandering, a little hidden place of soft, warm sand, dry and almost as fine to the touch as linen. And there, at the coming of darkness, I lay down for the night, and fell asleep to the lilt of waters and the scent of flowers."

The speaker paused and dug his toes gloomily into the sand. With every least motion, the muscles rippled like water under his fine brown skin. And I thought, not for the first time, that I had never seen a Hercules to compare with him, or any man so bubbling over with vitality. I should like to have had him trained and matched against Jeffries in the latter's palmy days. But, of course, the notion that this preposterous young giant had come to the island in a whaler was pure buncombe.

"The old Susan B. Cushing," I said, "is laid up alongside a wharf in New Bedford. I had occasion to go all over her a year ago. I was planning a story about whaling." Then I played what I considered to be an ace. "Her last voyage," I said sweetly, "was in 1876."

To my horror, almost, the Hercules showed no surprise.

"The Centennial year," he agreed; "that's right. She touched here. I saw her. But I came out in 'Seventy."

"My dear fellow," I said, "that is forty-six years ago!"

"I was twenty-two," he said; "that would make me sixty-eight, wouldn't it? God! What a lot of years!"

He made this extraordinary statement with no more effort than if he had told me that Wang Lo, the copra merchant, lived in the last house but one on the main street of the village.

"You don't look a day over twenty-two at this moment," I said severely.

"Well, friend," he said quietly, "I don't know how old you are, but you are too old to jump at conclusions. Ask any of the old men how long I've been here, and how long I've looked the way I look now."

"If it doesn't make you angry to have me doubt you," I said, "I'll do that. I'll ask that man yonder, just beaching his canoe."

"But that is not an old man."

"You may have bribed all the old men," I laughed, "to bear you out. That man is middle-aged, by his paunch and the set of his shoulders and what he says will be gospel."

I shouted to the man, and he came up from the beach with pleasant alacrity and good nature. He was a splendid specimen of islander, a little too well covered with blubber, like all fine swimmers, but graceful and smooth-moving.

"Thank you for coming," I said. "I have a question to ask you. How long have you known my friend here?"

"Why," said the man, in curiously good English, "ever since I can remember."

"Well, I'm jiggered!" I said. "It's an outrageous conspiracy."

To make matters worse, the newcomer added.

"He's my father."

If that was true, the father looked about half the age of the son.

"Is that all?" asked the son. "Because I have taken some fish, and the sun is hot."

He bowed gravely and went back to his canoe. I expressed no further doubts, and Hercules resumed his narrative.

"Laughter, shouting, and splashing waked me. It sounded like children at play. But I looked out between the leaves and saw that there were no children. That was the pity of it—the fountain is too strong for children. It kills children. There was one old man, but most of the bathers were young—in the early twenties. They weren't all joyous. There were two, and they appeared to be the youngest couple of all, who sat apart and looked as if they were going to cry at any moment. I learned afterward that the girl had had a baby and that the fountain had killed it. Usually the babies don't get born alive.

"I came out from hiding after a while, a little anxious as to what sort of a reception I would get; but they were a jolly, good-natured lot. One of the girls waded close to where I stood, and suddenly splashed me all over, and then, laughing, she dove and swam off under water. The others shouted to me and laughed, but it was only from their gestures that I gathered what they were saying. 'Come in,' they were saying; 'the water is great!'

"So I stripped off my rags and went in. I was hazed some, ducked, and tripped and splashed—but all in fun, and I didn't mind a bit. And the exhilaration, mental and physical, which came of bathing in those waters was too extraordinary for description. We pulled out after a while and had a jolly breakfast under the trees. The men shook the trees, and the white and red and yellow fruits that had reached perfection fell heavily on the sand. It was the old man who started pulling flowers and pelting them around. We had a regular battle, and, after that, some of us bathed again, and others wandered off in the forest, and returned with strings of flowers round their necks.

"There was nothing but play and love in that valley—play and love—and the sadness of the two who had lost their baby. Sometimes the girl just hid her face against the boy's breast and burst out crying. And he would frown in his anguish and stroke her dark hair.

"The old man had long passed the age of love, and, as for me, I had made the discovery that in all the world there was only one girl that I cared to think about—Aola. Queer! A relationship entered into so lightly, so carelessly, so sinfully, if you like, had blossomed into something very big and very serious. I thought about her all the time, except when we got romping and playing tricks and only remembered how young we were.

"There was no permanent encampment or village. There was an acreage, though, where most of us went at night to sleep. There grew a thick and delicious moss that smelled like wild thyme; and there was a kind of umbrella-tree of so dense a thatch that, even in the rains, those who slept beneath remained dry. You were never cold; you were never hot. Cuts healed in a day. There were no fevers possible, no inflammations, no indigestions—no setbacks to the wonderful life that throbbed in your veins and that built up muscles like mine.

"It was all talking and laughter, play and love, battles with flowers, and joyous dancing over the firm, yellow sand.





"Laughter, shouting, and splashing waked me. It sounded like children at play"



"I learned very quickly the simple and pretty language that they spoke. It was a happy language, that grew as it pleased.

"I lived among them for a number of months until I had become one of them. Then I told them that I was going away for a while, but that I would come back with Aola, whom they must all promise to love. And they promised. The girls made some wreaths of many-colored flowers and hung them about my neck, and laughed and kissed me, and the men patted me on the back and wished me a swift journey and a swift return.

"When I had gone a mile or so, I came upon the lovers who had lost their baby.

"'We, too,' said the girl, acting as spokesman, 'wish you a swift journey and a swift return; but you must not bring Aola to this place without telling her what the fountain does to the babies. It may be that, when she knows, she will not wish to come here with you. It is a terrible thing to lose a little son.'

"'If we did not love each other,' said the boy shyly, 'we should wish to die. Only, in this place grown folk never die. There was Taloa, it is true, who climbed a high place in sport, and fell and was so broken that she could not live, and many years ago—how many, I do not remember—there was the white man—he also had to climb. He climbed high, and then, with his hands resting on his thighs, he dove, and came down upon the flat rock, first striking it with his head.'

"'You will tell her about the babies, won't you?' said the girl.

"The last I saw of them, they had turned to each other, and the girl had laid her face against the boy's breast.

"I did not return to Aola by the hub of the island, but by the beaches, swimming round the headlands and laughing aloud, sometimes, with the sheer joy of knowing that

I was stronger than any wave. You don't know the joy of being able to swim, to swim in the way that fish swim,—the strong fish, dolphins and porpoises—when every muscle of your body and your skin, even, seems to drive you forward without any conscious effort. I rounded the last headland in a gale. I was under water more than half the time, and breaking records, and thinking nothing about it. The tricks are easy; it's the strength and the peculiar fiber that count. Even the islanders haven't got them—only the boys and girls who live in the Forbidden Valley and bathe in the fountain.

"Aola screamed when she saw me. She thought I was a ghost. I did not speak. I just stood and looked at her. She got up slowly and heavily. And she had a good look at me. She was trembling all over. She took a step forward, and then she said,

"'Even if you are a ghost, I love you.'

"'If I am a ghost,' I said, and tried to speak like one, 'and you touch me, you know that you will turn cold and die.'

"'If you are a ghost,' she said, 'I want to die.'

"And she flung her arms round me. And I remembered a play I'd read and I said,

"'Hang there like fruit, my soul, till the tree die.'"

"It wasn't easy to speak to Aola about the Forbidden Valley and the fountain. Whenever I tried to broach the subject, I seemed to see the girl who had lost her baby, and she seemed to say, 'You promised.'

"Now, I hadn't actually promised, but I felt in duty bound; and it was very disconcerting to know that Aola's life and mine were no longer complicated by mere possibilities. It had not even been necessary for Aola to tell me. I knew.

"But one night—it's easier to say certain things at night—I took the business up with her.

"'How much do you love me?' I asked.

"'More than anything on the island or in the sea.'

"'If we could stay just as we are, young, strong—not for a few years but forever, Aola—or

(Concluded on page 134)



"Aola screamed when she saw me. She thought I was a ghost"



# A Genius of the Short Story

(Concluded from page 93)

its publication and reception she has little interest; she is off again on the newer story that is going to come just a little nearer than its predecessors to the garment's hem of True Romance. She gives a public of several millions exactly what she would give a public of one, or what she would write for no public at all. Take it or leave it, it is Fannie Hurst.

At present, she is apparently the only writer in the Union who is not confidently planning the Great American Novel. She loves just what she is doing, and finds the medium of the short story the one that suits her best. And it is hard to imagine her in any other field than this one, which she has made peculiarly her own. To analyze one of her stories is to arrive nowhere; it is the old mystery of the flower in the crannied wall. Yet there is technique as well as sheer instinct in the way that it is done; the apparently rambling conversations develop the plot in a series of hammer-strokes, and the sobbing ejaculations, in their aimless repetition, have a perfectly human fashion of wringing the heart.

There are certain stories among the twenty-five or thirty upon which this astonishing reputation rests that I never can read with dry eyes. There is something about the hot kitchens, and the crowded basement-shops, and the shabby clothes, and the beauty of love and sacri-

dingy doorway or a subway hood, and, lo! we have the strength of weakness and the weakness of strength, selfishness turned into beauty and courage, and false joy stripped of its mask and crumbling into black despair.

So I use the word "genius" for Fannie Hurst, and for no other writer of short stories—unless Mr. Conrad's novelettes come into that category—to-day. Other writers follow a certain formula, more or less deliberately concede convention something, pattern themselves, perhaps unconsciously, upon Kipling or O. Henry or George Moore. She copies no one.

A hundred years from now, when the children of a democratic world are patiently memorizing the dates of the Great War, it might be interesting to see what place Fannie Hurst will hold in American literature. I rather fancy that she will not be in a group even then. She is young, and may add riper work to this first work, may try the novel, after all.

But even on the strength of those twenty-five stories, she is entitled to a place of her own.

**Fannie Hurst's**  
next story,  
***She Also Serves,***  
will appear in  
**October Cosmopolitan.**

fice creeping up through the sordidness that is always new. The angry, loyal love of a mother, the protecting sister-love, the weak love of the parasite—sometimes I think that it is the theme of love running through them all that is their real secret. Two obscure forms emerge from a

## An Immortal

(Concluded from page 64)

until this island sinks like a ship in the sea or rises and flows over it—would you like that?"

"But we are not gods or devils."

"Neither one or the other; but, Aola, there are people like that—lovers like that—who are neither gods nor devils. I know, because I have seen them. I have lived with them. There is a fountain that they bathe in, and, when they have bathed, they neither grow old nor die. Nature cannot kill them—only violence. And in the place where they live, there is no violence."

"She did not show either doubt or surprise."

"They live in the Forbidden Valley," she said. "Some believe in those people; others do not. But you have seen them."

"I am one of them, Aola. I have bathed in the fountain. And I have returned for you. The love that is between us two will never die while there is life in us. I am sure of that. When you have bathed in the fountain, your dear body, like mine, will be immortal."

"Is this true?"

"I kissed her on the lips, and said, 'Yes, Aola.'"

"Then," she said, "let us prepare at once for the journey. I am not very fit for travel."

"You do not know how strong I am. If it is necessary, I could carry you all the way in my arms. But there is one thing to think of: You cannot bathe in the fountain without paying a price. To a woman, it will seem a very great price. Your child, Aola, will either be born dead or it will die soon after it is born. The fountain is too strong for little children. There is the river, that is sweet, good water, but sooner or later a child will find its way to the fountain. It cannot be otherwise. And the fountain kills them."

"The price, then," she said, "is the child. Our child—your child and mine."

"I don't ask you to decide at once."

"We should be lovers, and immortal—and without children! And you ask me not to decide at once. Oh, how could you ever think so lightly of me?"

"She burst out sobbing and flung herself into my arms."

"It's all right, dear," I said. "I thought for a moment that we could pay the price and forget that we had paid it; but, of course, we couldn't."

He broke off abruptly.

"Come up to my house," he said; "I'd like you to meet Aola."

She had borne many children, and she showed her age. Her hair was white as snow, and she had lost a good many of her teeth; but there was a sweetness and compassionateness about the old lady's smile that won me completely. She made us welcome and gave us a most delectable preparation of breadfruit and a bowl of island wine.

"Your husband," I said, "has told me a wonderful story."

"It is all true," she said. "You have only to look at us to know that. I have grown old. It has been hard for him, and I have told him that he should bring a young woman into the house, as is our island custom. But he will not do that. He is as good as he is young and beautiful. He has had his sorrows, and I have had mine. Our first boy did not live to be a man. But it wasn't as if we had let him be killed in the fountain. We were without guilt, and, after a while, peace returned to us."

Hercules accompanied me part-way to the village. His face was very sad and brooding.

"It is horrible," he said, "to stand still while everyone else goes on—my wife and my children growing old before my eyes. Those who in any way have cheated nature will live to suffer the fires of hell."

"I wish," I said, "that I could get you to come to New York and lecture on birth-control. There aren't many American girls who would decide as Aola did. And for the price they pay, our young women don't even get immortality. May I ask you one question? The thing must have occurred to you. In the course of time, Aola and your children—"

"Yes," he said simply; "I shall have to bury them all. But there will be the grandchildren and the great-grandchildren—"

"You will marry again."

He shook his head.

"You must see that."

I did, of course.

"When my line runs out," he said, "I shall do as the white man did—climb to some place and dive off. When do you expect to be in New York?"

"Well, first," I said, "I'm going to try and get into the Forbidden Valley."

"After what you've seen, and after what I've told you?"

"I have no ties to worry me," I said. "I'll take my chances."

"People who cheat nature don't take chances," he said. "They go against certainties."

"I've got to bathe in that fountain," I said. "Yesterday, the ship's barber cut my hair. He cut all the hairs but one. That one he seized with tweezers and pulled out by the roots. It was gray."

"Well," said Hercules, "if you do decide to go to the Forbidden Valley, I wish you the best luck in the world—I hope that you will fall from a cliff and break your neck."

*Gouverneur Morris's* next story, *The Sure-Thing Man*, will appear in **October Cosmopolitan.**





# The Red One

THERE it was! The abrupt liberation of sound, as he timed it with his watch, Bassett likened to the trump of an archangel. Walls of cities, he meditated, might well fall down before so vast and compelling a summons. For the thousandth time vainly, he tried to analyze the tone-quality of that enormous peal that dominated the land far into the strongholds of the surrounding tribes. The mountain gorge, which was its source, rang to the rising tide of it until it brimmed over and flooded earth and sky and air. With the wantonness of a sick man's fancy, he likened it to the mighty cry of some Titan of the Elder World vexed with misery or wrath. Higher and higher it rose, challenging and demanding in such profoundness of volume that it seemed intended for ears beyond the narrow confines of the solar system.

Such the sick man's fancy. Still he strove to analyze the sound. Sonorous as thunder was it, mellow as a golden bell, thin and sweet as a thrummed taut cord of silver—no; it was none of these, or a blend of these. There were no words or semblances in his vocabulary and experience with which to describe the totality of that sound.

Time passed. Minutes merged into quarters of hours, and quarters of hours into half-hours, and still the sound persisted, ever changing from its initial vocal impulse, yet never receiving fresh impulse—fading, dimming, dying as enormously as it has sprung into being. It became a confusion of troubled mutterings and babblings and colossal whisperings. Slowly it withdrew, sob by sob, into whatever great bosom had birthed it, until it whimpered deadly whispers of wrath and as equally seductive whispers of delight, striving still to be heard, to convey some cosmic secret, some understanding of infinite import and value. It dwindled to a ghost of sound that had lost its menace and promise, and became a thing that pulsed on in the sick man's consciousness for minutes after it had ceased. When he could hear it no longer, Bassett glanced at his watch. An hour had elapsed ere that archangel's trump had subsided into tonal nothingness.

Was it months, or years, he asked himself, since he first heard that mysterious call on the beach at Ringmanu? To save himself, he could not tell. His long sickness had been most long. In conscious count of time, he knew of months, many of them; but he had no way of estimating the long intervals of delirium and stupor. And how fared Captain Bateman of the blackbird, Nari, he wondered; and had Captain Bateman's drunken mate died of delirium tremens yet?

From which vain speculations Bassett turned idly to review all that had occurred since that day on the beach of Ringmanu when he first heard the sound and plunged into the jungle after it. Sagawa had protested. He could see him yet, his queer little monkeyish face eloquent with fear, his back burdened with specimen-cases, in his hands Bassett's butterfly-net and naturalist's shotgun, as he quavered in *bêche-de-mer* English: "Me fella too much fright along bush. Bad fella boy too much stop'm along bush."

Bassett smiled sadly at the recollection.

With one barrel of his ten-gage shotgun he had blown the

COPYRIGHT, 1934, BY GLEN R. HUGHES



## By Jack London

Illustrated by G. Patrick Nelson

The little New Hanover boy had been frightened, but had proved faithful, following him without hesitancy into the bush in the quest after the source of the wonderful sound. No fire-hollowed tree-trunk that, throbbing war through the jungle-depths, had been Bassett's conclusion. Erroneous had been his next conclusion, namely, that the source or cause could not be more distant than an hour's walk and that he would easily be back by mid-afternoon, to be picked up by the Nari's whale-boat.

"That big-fella noise no good, all the same devil-devil," Sagawa had adjudged. And Sagawa had been right. Had he not had his head hacked off within the day? Bassett shuddered. Within a minute the thing had happened. Within a minute, looking back, Bassett had seen him trudging patiently along under his burdens. Then Bassett's own trouble had come upon him. He looked at the cruelly healed stumps of the first and second fingers of his left hand, then rubbed them softly into the indentation in the back of his skull. Quick as had been the flash of the long-handled tomahawk, he had been quick enough to duck away his head and partially to deflect the stroke with his up-flung hand. Two fingers and a nasty scalp-wound had been the price he paid for his life. With one barrel of his tengage shotgun he had blown the life out of the bushman who had so nearly got him; with the other barrel he had peppered the bushmen bending over Sagawa, and had the pleasure of knowing that the major portion of the charge had gone into the one who leaped away with Sagawa's head.

Everything had occurred in a flash. Only himself, the slain bushman, and what remained of Sagawa were in the narrow wild-pig-run of a path. From the dark jungle on either side came no rustle of movement or sound of life. And he had suffered distinct and dreadful shock. For the first time in his life, he had killed a human being.

Then had begun the chase. He retreated up the pig-run before his hunters, who were between him and the beach. How many there were, he could not guess. There might have been one, or a hundred, for aught he saw of them. At the most, he never glimpsed more than an occasional flitting of shadows. No bowstrings twanged that he could hear; but every little while, whence discharged he knew not, tiny arrows whispered past him or struck tree-boles and fluttered to the ground beside him.

What a night had followed! Small wonder that he had accumulated such a virulence and variety of fevers, he thought, as he recalled that sleepless night of torment, when the throb of his wounds was as nothing compared with the myriad stings of the mosquitoes. There had been no escaping them, and he had not dared to light a fire. They had literally pumped his body full of poison, so that, with the coming of day, eyes swollen almost shut, he had stumbled blindly on, not caring much when his head

should be hacked off and his carcass started on the way of Sagawa's to the cooking-fire. Twenty-four hours had made a wreck of him—of mind as well as body. He had scarcely retained his wits at all, so maddened was he by the tremendous inoculation of poison. Several times he fired his shotgun with effect into the shadows that dogged him. Stinging day-insects and gnats added to his torment, while his bloody wounds attracted hosts of loathsome flies that clung sluggishly to his flesh and had to be brushed off and crushed off.

Once, in that day, he heard again the wonderful sound, seemingly more distant, but rising imperiously above the nearer war-drums in the bush. Right there was where he had made his mistake. Thinking that he had passed beyond it and that, therefore, it was be-



life out of the bushman who had so nearly got him



tween him and the beach of Ringmanu, he had worked back toward it, when, in reality, he was penetrating deeper and deeper into the mysterious heart of the unexplored island. That night, crawling in among the twisted roots of a banyan tree, he had slept from exhaustion, while the mosquitoes had had their will of him.

Followed days and nights that were vague as nightmares in his memory. One clear vision he remembered was of suddenly finding himself in the midst of a bush-village and watching the old men and children fleeing into the jungle. All had fled but one. From close at hand and above him, a whimpering as of some animal in pain and terror had startled him. And, looking up, he had seen her—a girl, or young woman, rather, suspended by one arm in the cooking sun. Perhaps for days she had so hung. Her swollen, protruding tongue spoke as much. Still alive, she gazed at him with eyes of terror. Past help, he decided, as he noted the swellings of her legs, which advertised that the joints had been crushed and the great bones broken. He resolved to shoot her, and there the vision terminated. He could not remember whether he had shot her or not, any more than could he remember how he chanced to be in that village or how he succeeded in getting away from it.

Many pictures, unrelated, came and went in Bassett's mind as he reviewed that period of his terrible wanderings. But seared deepest of all in his brain was the dank and noisome jungle. It actually stank with evil, and it was always twilight. Rarely did a shaft of sunlight penetrate its matted roof a hundred feet overhead. And beneath that roof was an aerial ooze of vegetation, a monstrous, parasitic dripping of decadent life-forms that rooted in death and lived on death. And through all this he drifted, ever pursued by the flitting shadows of the anthropophagi, themselves ghosts of evil that dared not face him in battle but that knew, soon or late, that they would feed on him. Bassett remembered that, at the time, in lucid moments, he had compared himself to a wounded bull pursued by plains coyotes too cowardly to battle with him for the meat of him, yet certain of the inevitable end of him when they would be full gorged. As the bull's horns and stamping hoofs kept off the coyotes, so his shotgun kept off these Solomon Islanders, these twilight shades of bushmen of the island of Guadalcanar.

Came the day of the grass-lands. Abruptly, as if cloven by the sword of God in the hand of God, the jungle terminated. The edge of it, perpendicular and as black as the infamy of it, was a hundred feet up and down. And, beginning at the edge of it, grew the grass—sweet, soft, tender pasture-grass that would have delighted the eyes and beasts of any husbandman and that extended on and on, for leagues and leagues of velvet verdure, to the back-bone of the great island, the towering mountain range flung up by some ancient earth-cataclysm, serrated and gullied but not yet erased by the erosive tropic rains. But the grass! He had crawled into it a dozen yards, buried his face in it, smelled it, and broken down in a fit of involuntary weeping.

And, while he wept, the wonderful sound had pealed forth—if by "peal," he had often thought since, an adequate description could be given of the enunciation of so vast a sound so melting sweet. Sweet it was as no sound ever heard. Vast it was, of so mighty a resonance that it might have proceeded from some brazen-throated monster. And yet it called to him across that leagues'-wide savanna, and was like a benediction to his long-suffering, pain-racked spirit.

Two days and nights he had spent crawling across that belt of grass-land. He had suffered much, but pursuit had ceased at the jungle-edge. And he would have died of thirst had not a heavy thunder-storm revived him on the second day.

And then had come Balatta. In the first shade, where the savanna yielded to the dense mountain jungle, he had collapsed to die. At first she had squealed with delight at sight of his helplessness, and was for beating his brains out

with a stout forest branch. Perhaps it was his very utter helplessness that had appealed to her, and perhaps it was her human curiosity that made her refrain. At any rate, she had refrained, for he opened his eyes again under the impending blow, and saw her studying him intently. What especially struck her about him were his blue eyes and white skin. Coolly she had squatted on her hams, spat on his arm, and with her finger-tips scrubbed away the dirt of days and nights of muck and jungle that sullied the pristine whiteness of his skin.

And everything about her had struck him especially, although there was nothing conventional about her at all. He laughed weakly at the recollection, for she had been as innocent of garb as Eve before the fig-leaf adventure. Squat and lean at the same time, asymmetrically limbed, string-muscled as if with lengths of cordage, dirt-caked from infancy save for casual showers, she was as unbeautiful a prototype of woman as he, with a scientist's eye, had ever gazed upon. Her breasts advertised at the one time her maturity and youth; and, if by nothing else, her sex was advertised by the one article of finery with which she was adorned—namely, a pig's tail thrust through a hole in her left ear-lobe. And her face! A twisted and wizened complex of apish features, perforated by upturned, sky-open, Mongolian nostrils, by a mouth that sagged from a huge upper lip and faded precipitately into a retreating chin, and by peering, querulous eyes that blinked as blink the eyes of denizens of monkey-cages.

Not even the water she brought him in a forest leaf, and the ancient and half-putrid chunk of roast pig could redeem in the slightest the grotesque hideousness of her. When he had eaten weakly for a space, he closed his eyes in order not to see her, although again and again she poked them open to peer at the blue of them. Then had come the sound. Nearer, much nearer, he knew it to be; and he knew equally well, despite the weary way he had come, that it was still many hours distant. The effect of it on her had been startling. She cringed under it, with averted face, moaning and chattering with fear. But after it had lived its full life of an hour, he closed his eyes and fell asleep, with Balatta brushing the flies from him.

When he awoke, it was night, and she was gone. But he was aware of renewed strength, and, by then, too thoroughly inoculated by the mosquito-poison to suffer further inflammation, he closed his eyes and slept an unbroken stretch till sunup. A little later, Balatta had returned, bringing with her half a dozen women, who, unbeautiful as they were, were patently not so unbeautiful as she. She evidenced by her conduct that she considered him her find, her property, and the pride she took in showing him off would have been ludicrous had his situation not been so desperate.

Later, after what had been to him a terrible journey of miles, when he collapsed in front of the devil-devil house in the shadow of the breadfruit tree, she had shown very lively ideas on the matter of retaining possession of him. Ngurn, whom Bassett was to know afterward as the devil-devil doctor, priest, or medicine-man of the village, had wanted his head. Others of the grinning and chattering monkey-men, all as stark of clothes and bestial of appearance as Balatta, had wanted his body for the roasting-oven. At that time, he had not understood their language, if by "language" might be dignified the uncouth sounds they used to represent ideas. But Bassett had thoroughly understood the matter of debate, especially when the men pressed and prodded and felt of the flesh of him.

Balatta had been losing the debate rapidly when the accident happened. One of the men, curiously examining Bassett's shotgun, managed to cock and pull a trigger. The recoil of the butt into the pit of the man's stomach had not been the most sanguinary result, for the charge of shot, at a distance of a yard, had blown the head of one of the debaters into nothingness.

Even Balatta joined the others in flight, and, ere they





PHOTO BY H. F. HARRIS

"I would like to have the curing of your head," Ngurn changed the subject. "It is different from any other head. No devil-devil has a head like it. Besides, I would cure it well. I would take months and months"



returned, his senses already reeling from the oncoming fever-attack, Bassett had regained possession of the gun. Whereupon, although his teeth chattered with the ague and his swimming eyes could scarcely see, he held onto his fading consciousness until he could intimidate the bushmen with the simple magics of compass, watch, burning-glass, and matches. At the last, with due emphasis of solemnity and awfulness, he had killed a young pig with his shotgun and promptly fainted.

Bassett flexed his arm-muscles in quest of what possible strength might reside in such weakness, and dragged himself slowly and tottering to his feet. He was shockingly emaciated; yet, during the various convalescences of the many months of his long sickness, he had never regained quite the same degree of strength as this time. What he feared was another relapse, such as he had already frequently experienced. Without drugs, without even quinine, he had managed, so far, to live through a combination of the most pernicious and most malignant of malarial and black-water fevers. But could he continue to endure? Such was his everlasting query. For, like the genuine scientist he was, he would not be content to die until he had solved the secret of the sound.

Supported by a staff, he staggered the few steps to the devil-devil house, where death and Ngurn reigned in gloom. Almost as infamously dark and evil-stinking as the jungle was the devil-devil house—in Bassett's opinion. Yet therein was usually to be found his favorite crony and gossip, Ngurn, always willing for a yarn or a discussion, the while he sat in the ashes of death and, in a slow smoke, shrewdly revolved curing human heads suspended from the rafters. For, through the months' intervals of consciousness of his long sickness, Bassett had mastered the psychological simplicities and lingual difficulties of the language of the tribe of Ngurn and Balatta and Gngngn—the latter the addle-headed young chief who was ruled by Ngurn, and who, whispered intrigue had it, was the son of Ngurn.

"Will the Red One speak to-day?" Bassett asked, by this time so accustomed to the old man's gruesome occupation as to take even an interest in the progress of the curing.

With the eye of an expert, Ngurn examined the particular head he was at work upon.

"It will be ten days before I can say, 'Finish,' " he said. "Never has any man fixed heads like these."

Bassett smiled inwardly at the old fellow's reluctance to talk with him of the Red One. It had always been so. Never, by any chance, had Ngurn or any other member of the weird tribe divulged the slightest hint of any physical characteristic of the Red One. Physical the Red One must be, to emit the wonderful sound, and though it was called the Red One, Bassett could not be sure that red represented the color of it. Red enough were the deeds and powers of it, from what abstract clues he had gleaned. Not alone, had Ngurn informed him, was the Red One more bestial, powerful than the neighbor tribal gods, ever athirst for the red blood of living human sacrifices, but the neighbor-gods themselves were sacrificed and tormented before him. He was the god of a dozen allied villages similar to this one, which was the central and commanding village of the federation. By virtue of the Red One, many alien villages had been devastated and even wiped out, the prisoners sacrificed to the Red One. This was true to-day, and it extended back into old history, carried down by word of mouth through the generations. When he, Ngurn, had been a young man, the tribes beyond the grass-lands had made a war-raid. In the counter-raid, Ngurn and his fighting folk had made many prisoners. Of children alone, over five score living had been bled white before the Red One, and many, many more men and women.

The Thunderer, was another of Ngurn's names for the mysterious deity. Also, at times was he called the Loud Shouter, the God-voiced, the Bird-throated, the One with the Throat Sweet as the Throat of the Honey-Bird, the Sun-Singer, and the Star-born.



And the next thing he did in the singular courtship was to





take her down to the stream for a vigorous scrubbing

Why the Star-born? In vain, Bassett interrogated Ngurn. According to that old devil-devil doctor, the Red One had always been just where he was at present, forever singing and thundering his will over men. But Ngurn's father, wrapped in decaying grass-matting and hanging even then over their heads among the smoky rafters of the devil-devil house, had held otherwise. That departed wise one had believed that the Red One came from out the starry night, else why—so his argument had run—had the old and forgotten ones passed his name down as the Star-born? Bassett could not but recognize something cogent in such argument. But Ngurn affirmed the long years of his long life, wherein he had gazed upon many starry nights, yet never had he found a star on grass-land or in jungle-depth—and he had looked for them. True, he had beheld shooting-stars (this in reply to Bassett's contention); but likewise had he beheld the phosphorescence of fungoid growths and rotten meat and fireflies on dark nights, and the flames of wood fires and of blazing candlenuts. Yet what were flame and blaze and glow when they had flamed and blazed and glowed? Answer: Memories, memories only, of things which had ceased to be, like memories of matings accomplished, of feasts forgotten, of desires that were the ghosts of desires, flaring, flaming, burning, yet unrealized in achievement of easement and satisfaction.

A memory was not a star, was Ngurn's contention. How could a memory be a star? Further, after all his long life, he still observed the starry night sky unaltered. Never had he noted the absence of a single star from its accustomed place. Besides, stars were fire, and the Red One was not fire—which last involuntary betrayal told Bassett nothing.

"Will the Red One speak to-morrow?" he queried. Ngurn shrugged his shoulders as who should say. "And the day after—and the day after that?" Bassett persisted.

"I would like to have the curing of your head," Ngurn changed the subject. "It is different from any other head. No devil-devil has a head like it. Besides, I would cure it well. I would take months and months. The skin would not wrinkle. It would be as smooth as your skin now."

He stood up, and from the dim rafters, grimed with the smoking of countless heads, where day was no more than a gloom, took down a matting-wrapped parcel and began to open it.

"It is a head like yours," he said, "but it is poorly cured."

Bassett had pricked up his ears at the suggestion that it was a white man's head; for he had long since come to accept that these jungle-dwellers, in the midmost center of the great island, had never had intercourse with white men. Certainly he had found them without the almost universal *bêche-de-mer* English of the west South Pacific. Nor had they knowledge of tobacco or of gunpowder.

"The folk in the out-beyond do not know how to cure heads," old Ngurn explained, as he drew forth from the filthy matting and placed in Bassett's hands an indubitable white man's head.

Ancient it was beyond question; white it was, as the blond hair attested. He could have sworn it once belonged to an Englishman, and to an Englishman of long before, by token of the heavy gold circlets still threaded in the withered ear-lobes.

"Now, your head—" The devil-devil doctor began on his favorite topic.

"I'll tell you what," Bassett interrupted, struck by a new idea: "When I die, I'll let you have my head to cure, if, first, you take me to look upon the Red One."

"I will have your head, anyway, when you are dead," Ngurn rejected the proposition. He added, with the brutal frankness of the savage: "Besides, you have not long to live. You are almost a dead man now. You will grow less strong. In not many months I shall have you here turning and turning in the smoke. It is pleasant, through the long afternoons, to turn the head of one you have known as well as I know you. And I shall talk to you and tell you the many secrets you want to know. Which will not matter, for you will be dead."



## The Red One

"Ngurn," Bassett threatened in sudden anger, "you know the Baby-Thunder-in-the-Iron that is mine." (This was in reference to his all-potent and all-awful shotgun.) "I can kill you any time, and then you will not get my head."

"Just the same will Gngngn or some one else of my folk get it," Ngurn complacently assured him.

And Bassett knew he was beaten in the discussion.

What was the Red One?—Bassett asked himself a thousand times in the succeeding week, while he seemed to grow stronger. What was the source of the wonderful sound? What was this Sun-Singer, this Star-born One, this mysterious deity, as bestial-conducted as the black and kinky-headed and monkeylike human beasts who worshiped it, and whose silver-sweet, bull-mouthed singing and commanding he had heard at the tabu-distance for so long?


Ngurn had he failed to bribe with the inevitable curing of his head when he was dead. Gngngn, imbecile and chief that he was, was too imbecilic, too much under the sway of Ngurn to be considered. Remained Balatta, who, from the time she found him and poked his blue eyes open to recrudescence of her grotesque female hideousness, had

continued his adorer. Woman she was, and he had long known that the only way to win from her treason to her tribe was through the woman's heart of her.

Bassett was a fastidious man. He had never recovered from the initial horror caused by Balatta's female awfulness. Back in England, even at best, the charm of woman to him had never been robust. Yet now, resolutely, as only a man can do who is capable of martyring himself for the cause of science, he proceeded to violate all the fineness and delicacy of his nature by making love to the unthinkably disgusting bushwoman.

He shuddered, but with averted face hid his grimaces and swallowed his gorge as he put his arm round her dirt-crust shoulders and felt the contact of her rancid-oily and kinky hair with his neck and chin. But he nearly screamed when she succumbed to that caress at the very first of the courtship, and mowed and gibbered and squealed little, queer, piglike gurgly noises of delight. It was too much. And the next he did in the singular courtship was to take her down to the stream for a vigorous scrubbing.

From then on, he devoted himself to her like a true swain as frequently and for as long at a time as his will could override his repugnance. But marriage, with she ardently sug-



gested, with due observance of tribal custom, he balked at. Fortunately, tabu rule was strong in the tribe. Thus, Ngurn could never touch bone or flesh or hide of crocodile. This had been ordained at his birth. Gngngn was denied ever the touch of woman. As for Balatta, the breadfruit was tabu to her. For which Bassett was thankful. The tabu might have been water.

For himself, he fabricated a special tabu. Only could he marry, he explained, when the Southern Cross rode highest in the sky. Knowing his astronomy, he thus gained a reprieve of nearly nine months; and he was confident that within that time he would either be dead or escaped to the coast with full knowledge of the Red One and of the source of the Red One's wonderful voice. At first, he had fancied the Red One to be some colossal statue, like Memnon, rendered vocal under certain temperature-conditions of sunlight. But when, after a war-rain, a batch of prisoners was brought in and the sacrifice made at night, in the midst of rain, when the sun could play no part, and the Red One had been more vocal than usual, Bassett discarded that hypothesis.



In company with Balatta, sometimes with men and parties of women, the freedom of the jungle was his for three quadrants of the compass. But the fourth quadrant, which contained the Red One's abiding-place, was tabu. He made more thorough love to Balatta—also saw to it that she scrubbed herself more frequently. Eternal female she was, capable of any treason for the sake of love. And, though the sight of her was provocative of nausea and the contact of her provocative of despair, although he could not escape her awfulness in his dream-haunted nightmares of her, he nevertheless was aware of the cosmic verity of sex that animated her and that made her own life of less value than the happiness of her lover with whom she hoped to mate. Juliet or Balatta? Where was the intrinsic difference?

Bassett was a scientist first, a humanist afterward. In the jungle-heart of Guadalcanar, he put the affair to the test, as in the laboratory he would have put to the test any chemical reaction. He increased his feigned ardor for the bushwoman, at the same time increasing the imperiousness of his will of desire over her to be led to look upon the Red One face to face. It was the old story,

Still climbing, although he paused often from sheer physical weakness, they scaled forest-clad heights until they emerged on a naked mesa or table-land. Bassett recognized the stuff of its composition as black volcanic sand, and knew that a pocket-magnet could have captured a full load of the sharply angular grains he trod upon.

And then, holding Balatta by the hand and leading her onward, he came to it—a tremendous pit, obviously artificial, in the heart of the plateau. Old history, the South Seas "Sailing Directions," scores of remembered data and connotations swift and furious surged through his brain. It was old Mendaña who had discovered the islands and named them Solomon's, believing that he had found that monarch's fabled mines. They had laughed at the old navigator's childlike credulity; and yet here stood himself, Bassett, on the rim of an excavation for all the world like the diamond-pits of South Africa.

(Continued on page 132)



And the Red One himself, Bassett knew it to be on the instant—a perfect sphere, fully two hundred feet in diameter

he recognized, that the woman must pay, and it occurred when the two of them, one day, were catching the unclassified and unnamed little black fish, an inch long, half eel and half scaled, rotund with salmon-golden roe, that frequented the fresh water and that were esteemed, raw and whole, fresh or putrid, a perfect delicacy. Prone in the muck of the decaying jungle-floor, Balatta threw herself, clutching his ankles with her hands, kissing his feet and making slubbery noises that chilled his back-bone up and down again. She begged him to kill her rather than exact this ultimate love-payment. She told him of the penalty of breaking the tabu of the Red One—a week of torture, living, the details of which she yammered out from her face in the mire until he realized that he was yet a tyro in knowledge of the frightfulness the human was capable of wreaking on the human.

Yet did Bassett insist on having his man's will satisfied at the woman's risk, that he might solve the mystery of the Red One's singing, though she should die long and horribly and screaming. And Balatta, being mere woman, yielded. She led him into the forbidden quadrant. An abrupt mountain, shouldering in from the north to meet a similar intrusion from the south, tormented the stream in which they had fished into a deep and gloomy gorge. After a mile along the gorge, the way plunged sharply upward until they crossed a saddle of raw limestone which attracted his geologist's eye.



had prided himself on his hard, conservative common sense. He had never taken any chances. He had never been on speaking-terms with risk.

By hard work and hard sense he was by way of becoming one of the indispensable subordinates in a well-known woolen house. He contrasted the facts of his own career with the notions that he had picked up concerning Rothenet's. They were about the same age. He, Stimson, had made steady progress from the day he left night school. Rothenet had been a rolling stone; he had quit one job and then another; his lack of stability had carried him (drifting and rolling) all over the world. He had had dozens of chances to Stimson's one; and yet, as Stimson said to himself, "Look at us!"

Stimson spent most of his days watching for the arrival of the fishing-fleet. He believed in his fishing-fleet as faithfully as a Chinaman believes in his ancestors. He regarded his life on the rock as an episode which would lend prestige and romance to his name in woolen circles. There would be columns in the newspapers about him. Often he thought, "Just wait till I hit New York!"

But the time for the arrival of the fishing-fleet in those waters came, and the fishing-fleet came not. It seldom rained now, and the water was low in the reservoir, stale, flat, and unprofitable. He had

long since put himself on the shortest of rations, and yet his provisions were almost gone.

More and more his thoughts centered on the probable fate of his late companions. He became certain in his mind that their foolhardy adventure had succeeded. But if so—and he asked himself this question a thousand times a day—why had they not sent back for him? It was not until he had eaten his last ration that he began to reproach himself with not having flown away with them.

The fool things had worked, and the sensible things hadn't. The rolling stone had gathered moss, and the solid rock was dying of hunger. The fishing-fleet which always came to these waters hadn't come. The sea-gulls, which always began to lay about now, didn't begin.

He hated them. They flew about the rock in ever-increasing numbers, perched on it, and fed themselves easily and incessantly from the water which flowed round its base. He hated them.

He hated Rothenet. A self-pitying jealousy gnawed him. Almost it was less tolerable than the pangs of hunger.

He had reached that stage of slow dissolution by hunger and thirst when men see visions and hear voices. Sometimes he wept bitterly for hatred and jealousy and self-pity. Sometimes he gave sudden shouts of joy—when some swimming speck

in his eye assumed for an instant the proportions of a far-off ship.

One night, rain fell. It cheered him, gave him a return of sanity, and renewed his little lease of life.

The morning dawned bright and warm. The surface of the rock was thickly dotted with white gulls.

They rose at any approach of his and circled away with shrill cries, but with reluctance, it seemed, and with no thought but to return at the earliest opportunity.

One gull, which had chosen a warm hollow to sit in, allowed him to approach within a few feet. He withdrew a little way and kept his eye on her. She was a symbol to him—the symbol of life. She was going to begin laying. She represented the triumph of common sense over foolhardiness.

"My reservoir has water in it," said Stimson, "and soon I shall have all the eggs I can eat. It will be the same with the fishing-fleet. I know that it will come. Reason, logic, common sense—that's what wins in the long run."

For an hour the gull did not move. Stimson watched her with narrowed eyes; his heart beat louder and louder.

The gull moved. She stretched her wings. She rose slowly and flew off.

Stimson dashed forward.

But he did not find an egg in the hollow of the rock.

The next *Gouverneur Morris* story, *Drifting Smoke*, will appear in *November Cosmopolitan*.

## The Red One

(Continued from page 41)

But no diamond this that he gazed down upon. Rather was it a pearl, with the depth of iridescence of a pearl, but of a size all pearls of earth and time, welded into one, could not have totaled, and of a color undreamed of any pearl, or of anything else, for that matter, for it was the color of the Red One. And the Red One himself, Bassett knew it to be on the instant—a perfect sphere, fully two hundred feet in diameter. He likened the color-quality of it to lacquer. Indeed, he took it to be some sort of lacquer applied by man, but a lacquer too marvelously clever to have been manufactured by the bush-folk. Brighter than bright cherry-red, its richness of color was as if it were red builded upon red. It glowed and iridescenced in the sunlight, as if gleaming up from underlay under underlay of red.

In vain, Balatta strove to dissuade him from descending. She threw herself in the dirt; but, when he continued down the trail that spiraled the pit wall, she followed, cringing and whimpering her terror. That the red sphere had been dug out as a precious thing was patent. Considering the paucity of members of the federated twelve villages and their primitive tools and methods, Bassett knew that the toil of a myriad generations could hardly have made that enormous excavation.

He found the pit bottom carpeted with human bones, among which, battered and defaced, lay village-gods of wood and stone. Some, covered with obscene totemic figures and designs, were carved from solid tree-trunks forty or fifty feet in length. He noted the absence of the shark and turtle gods, so common among the shore villages, and was amazed at the con-

stant recurrence of the helmet motive. What did these jungle savages of the dark heart of Gaudalcanar know of helmets? Had Mendaña's men-at-arms worn helmets and penetrated here centuries before? And if not, then whence had the bush-folk caught the motive?

Advancing over the litter of gods and bones, Balatta whimpering at his heels, Bassett entered the shadow of the Red One and passed on under its gigantic overhang until he touched it with his fingertips. No lacquer that. Nor was the surface smooth as it should have been in the case of lacquer. On the contrary, it was corrugated and pitted, with here and there patches that showed signs of heat and fusing. Also, the substance of it was metal, though unlike any metal or combination of metals he had ever known. As for the color itself, he decided it to be no application. It was the intrinsic color of the metal itself.

He moved his finger-tips, which, up to that, had merely rested, along the surface, and felt the whole gigantic sphere quicken and live and respond. It was incredible! So light a touch on so vast a mass! Yet did it quiver under the finger-tip caress in rhythmic vibrations that became whisperings and rustlings and mutterings of sound—but of sound so different, so elusive thin that it was shimmeringly sibilant, so mellow that it was maddening sweet, piping like an elfin horn, which last was just what Bassett decided would be like a peal from some bell of the gods reaching earthward from across space.

He looked to Balatta with swift questioning; but the voice of the Red One he had evoked had flung her face downward

and moaning among the bones. He returned to contemplation of the prodigy. Hollow it was, and of no metal known on earth, was his conclusion. It was right-named by the ones of old times as the Star-born. Only from the stars could it have come, and no thing of chance was it. It was a creation of artifice and mind. Such perfection of form, such hollowness that it certainly possessed could not be the result of mere fortuitousness. A child of intelligence, remote and unguessable, working corporeally in metals, it indubitably was. He stared at it in amaze, his brain a racing wild-fire of hypotheses to account for this far-journeyer who had adventured the night of space, threaded the stars, and now rose before him and above him, exhumed by patient anthropophagi, pitted and lacquered by its fiery bath in two atmospheres.

But was the color a lacquer of heat upon some familiar metal? Or was it an intrinsic quality of the metal itself? He thrust in the blade-point of his pocket-knife to test the constitution of the stuff. Instantly the entire sphere burst into a mighty whispering, sharp with protest, almost twanging goldenly, if a whisper could possibly be considered to twang, rising higher, sinking deeper, the two extremes of the registry of sound threatening to complete the circle and coalesce into the bull-mouthed thundering he had so often heard beyond the tabu-distance.

Forgetful of safety, of his own life itself, entranced by the wonder of the unthinkable and unguessable thing, he raised his knife to strike heavily from a long stroke, but was prevented by Balatta. She upreared on her own knees in an agony of



terror, clasping his knees and supplicating him to desist. In the intensity of her desire to impress him, she put her forearm between her teeth and sank them to the bone.

He scarcely observed her act, although he yielded automatically to his gentler instincts and withheld the knife-hack. To him, human life had dwarfed to microscopic proportions before this colossal portent of higher life from within the distances of the sidereal universe. As had she been a dog, he kicked the ugly little bush-woman to her feet, and compelled her to start with him on an encirclement of the base. Part-way round, he encountered horrors. Truly had the bush-folk named themselves into the name of the Red One, seeing in him their own image, which they strove to placate and please with red offerings.

Farther round, always treading the bones and images of humans and gods that constituted the floor of this ancient charnel-house of sacrifice, he came upon the device by which the Red One was made to send his call singing thunderingly across the jungle-belts and grass-lands to the far beach of Ringmanu. Simple and primitive it was as was the Red One consummate artifice. A great king-post, half a hundred feet in length, seasoned by centuries of superstitious care, carved into dynasties of gods, each superimposed, each helmeted, each seated in the open mouth of a crocodile, was slung by ropes, twisted of climbing vegetable parasites, from the apex of a tripod of three great forest trunks, themselves carved into grinning and grotesque adumbrations of man's modern concepts of art and god. From the striker king-post were suspended ropes of climbers, to which men could apply their strength and direction. Like a battering-ram, this king-post could be driven end-onward against the mighty red-iridescent sphere.

Here was where Ngurn officiated and functioned religiously for himself and the twelve tribes under him. Bassett laughed aloud, almost with madness, at the thought of this wonderful messenger winged with intelligence across space to fall into a bushman stronghold and be worshiped by apelike, man-eating, and head-hunting savages. It was as if God's word had fallen into the muck-mire of the abyss underlying the bottom of hell, as if Jehovah's commandments had been presented on carved stone to the monkeys of the monkey-cage at the zoo, as if the Sermon on the Mount had been preached in a roaring bedlam of lunatics.

The slow weeks passed. The nights, by election, Bassett spent on the ashen floor of the devil-devil house beneath the ever-swinging, slow-curing heads. His reason for this was that it was tabu to the lesser sex of woman, and, therefore, a refuge for him from Balatta, who grew more persecutingly and perilously lovelier as the Southern Cross rode higher in the sky and marked the imminence of her coming nuptials. His days, Bassett spent in a hammock swung under the shade of the great breadfruit tree before the devil-devil house. There were breaks in this program, when, in the comas of his devastating fever-attacks, he lay for days and nights in the house of heads. Ever he struggled to combat the fever, to live, to continue to live, to grow strong and stronger against the day

## Why Pay Full Prices for Diamonds



**\$180**

This ring has gorgeous beauty, exactly suited for a lady. The diamond weighs 1 1/2 ct. of blue-white color. Try to match at 60 per cent more.



**\$48**

This solitaire cluster has every appearance of a 2-carat diamond. An exact duplicate of platinum 14-carat white gold ring. Try to match this, too, at 60 per cent more.



**\$89**

This ring is a right up-to-date beautiful mounting. It is a fine blue-white diamond, 1 1/2 - 1 3/4 ct. An amazing saving.

**Jos. DeRoy & Sons, 1043 DeRoy Bldg.**  
Only Opp. Post Office, Pittsburgh, Pa.  
References by permission: *Formerly*  
Deposit National Bank, *Marine*  
National Bank, or any Pittsburgh  
daily Newspaper.

### Diamond Banking

A house nearly 1/2 century in one location is in the business of diamond banking—lending money on high-grade diamonds, watches and other jewelry. When money you lend is not repaid we must sell the diamonds.

### Try to Match at Full 60% More

Here you can get diamonds at wonderful savings, proved by customers' letters. Diamonds which originally sold at full prices. The exact quantities for which full prices are paid today. Any new mountings you prefer. And you can try to match at 60 per cent more.

### Guaranteed Cash Loan

Diamonds bought here are like insurance policies. You know what you can borrow before you decide to buy—see our CASH-BACK GUARANTEE.

**Sent on Approval** We will be glad to send you, prepaid on approval, and without obligation any of our bargains for free examination. See them before you buy. Don't miss this opportunity.

### Send at Once for Jos. DeRoy Bulletin

Radically different from the ordinary catalog. Hundreds of special bargains listed in this new bulletin. Write for it today. Not just one quality of diamonds but all qualities are shown in this remarkable bulletin. Your name and address on the card on the envelope, but don't delay—write today—NOW!

**Jos. DeRoy & Sons 1043 DeRoy Bldg.**

**Only Opp. Post Office, Pittsburgh, Pa.**

Gentlemen—Please send me, also, future free and prepaid, your new Bargain Bulletin of diamonds, watches and other jewelry. It is distinctly understood that I assume no obligation of any kind.

Name.....

Address.....

**"BOW LEGS and KNOCK KNEES" UNSIGHTLY**  
SEND FOR BOOKLET SHOWING PHOTOS OF MEN WITH AND WITHOUT THE PERFECT LEG FORMS  
**PERFECT SALES CO., 140 N. Mayfield Ave., Dept. A**  
Chicago, Ill.

**FREE BOOK ON BANKING**  
Tells of the great opportunities in this wonderful profession, and how you can learn by mail. Six months' term. Diploma awarded. **EDGAR G. ALGER, Pres.**  
**American School of Banking**  
110 East State Street, COLUMBUS, OHIO

**THE TEN PAYMENT PLAN**  
Buy an Income Month by Month  
**Dividends - & Profits Without Speculation**  
It is not easy to buy a stock and sell it quickly at a higher price—that is speculation. But it is sound and conservative investing to purchase securities of prosperous companies whose surplus and assets are accumulating. You then secure substantial dividends and share in the increased value of these securities from year to year.  
**The Ten Payment Plan** enables you to purchase the best and safest stocks upon a first payment of 20% and the balance in nine equal monthly sums. You secure dividends while making payments.  
Write for booklet C-10  
**E. M. Fuller & Co.**  
Members:  
Consolidated Stock Exchange of New York  
50 BROAD STREET NEW YORK

**Callouses Tenderness or Pain There**  
are signs of a weakened transverse arch. One or more of the little bones across the ball of the foot are displaced, causing uneven pressure. The sole of the foot burns; great and little toe joints enlarge and a cramplike pain known as Morton's Toe develops.  
Dr. Scholl's Anterior Metatarsal Arch Supports give immediate relief and assist Nature in permanent correction.  
**Dr. Scholl's Foot Comfort Appliances**  
There is a shoe dealer in your locality who can provide you with the appliances you need and advise you about your foot troubles. He has been trained in fitting the Dr. Scholl Appliances, which will overcome your foot trouble.  
**Send for Free Booklet**  
"The Feet and Their Care," by Dr. Wm. M. Scholl, recognized authority on all foot troubles. Sent free.  
**THE SCHOLL MFG. CO.**  
215G Schiller St. Chicago, Ill.



# Writes with superb smoothness, ease and certainty

The CONKLIN is the Pioneer Self-Filling Pen with 20 Years of Leadership back of it, and for time-tried Dependability, Simplicity and downright Comfort in both Filling and Writing, it has Never been Equalled—no, not even Approached

## Right Here

is the chief reason for the CONKLIN superiority—the "Crescent-Filler" is the heart and soul of the pen.

THE CONKLIN is not only the world's greatest writing instrument, with its steady, uniform ink flow and its smooth writing point—but it also has a self-filling device that is wholly different and distinctive—that is utterly unique in construction and positive in action—the famous little "Crescent-Filler" shown above.

Its operation is instant and unfailing—and it is so simple (has

only two parts) that it can't get out of order. Moreover, it prevents the pen from rolling off the desk.

All in all, the CONKLIN is the always-ready service pen for soldier or civilian—and especially for the student.

Get one today. Sold by leading stationers, jewelers, druggists and department stores, at \$2.50, \$3.00, \$4.00, \$5.00 and up. Canadian prices, 50 cents additional.

**Conklin's**  
Self-Filling  
Fountain Pen  
Non-Leakable

THE CONKLIN PEN MFG. COMPANY, Toledo, Ohio, U. S. A.

BOSTON  
39 Temple Place

CHICAGO  
1636 Lytle Bldg.

SAN FRANCISCO  
577 Market Street

WINNIPEG, CANADA  
146 Donald Street



## Refund Guarantee

### TAKE TEN LESSONS —THEN DECIDE

YOU hear a great deal nowadays about how special training has put men into high positions.

But do you realize what training will do for you? Other men have utilized their spare time in preparing for the work they want to do. The American School can train you for the very position that you're dreaming about.

#### MONEY REFUNDED

You can take ten lessons in any course offered by the American School with the distinct understanding that if, after you have completed the ten lessons, you are not convinced that this training is going to put you in a high position, every cent you have paid will be refunded.

#### YOU CAN MAKE GOOD

Marking the coupon will bring you worth-while facts. It will bring you testimonials from other ambitious men, some of them near you, who have won success through American School training. Prove your ambition by marking an "X" on the coupon and mailing it today.

AMERICAN SCHOOL OF CORRESPONDENCE  
Dept. G-1047 Chicago, U. S. A.

Resolutions I am qualified for (check position checked)

- |                               |                        |
|-------------------------------|------------------------|
| — Accountant and Auditor      | — High School Graduate |
| — Architect                   | — Lawyer               |
| — Automobile Engineer         | — Mechanical Engineer  |
| — Certified Public Accountant | — Statistician         |
| — Civil Engineer              | — Steam Engineer       |
| — Contractor and Builder      | — Stenographer         |
| — Draftsman and Designer      | — Structural Engineer  |
| — Electrical Engineer         | — Telephone Engineer   |
| — Fire Insurance Adjuster     | — W. O. Telegraph Work |

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_



## "I Now Hear Clearly" You, Too, Can Hear!

As much as 325,000 uses of the "ACOUSTICON" have had the same results from it as Mr. Garrett Brown, whose photo appears above, we feel perfectly safe in saying every deaf person, without a penny of expense, easily and entirely at our risk, to accept the new

### 1918 Acousticon

For 10 Days'

Free Trial



No Deposit

No Expense

Since perfecting of our new 1918 "ACOUSTICON" it is smaller, better and just as strong as ever. All you need do is to write saying that you are 18 or over, and will try the "ACOUSTICON." The trial will not cost you one cent, for we even pay delivery charges.

**WARNING!** There is no need to say anyone should not make an liberal investment as we do, we do not need money for any investment for the trial and you have tried it.

The "ACOUSTICON" has improvements and features which cannot be duplicated, no matter what you have tried in the past, and for your free trial of the "ACOUSTICON" today and convince yourself—you alone to decide. Address

GENERAL ACOUSTIC CO., 1305 Candler Bldg., NEW YORK  
Canadian Address, 321 New York Bldg., Montreal

when he would be strong enough to dare the grass-lands and the belted jungle beyond, and win to the beach and to some labor-recruiting, blackbinding ketch or schooner, and on to civilization and the men of civilization, to whom he could give news of the message from other worlds that lay, darkly worshiped by beast-men, in the black heart of Gaudalcanar's midmost center.

On other nights, lying late under the breadfruit tree, Bassett spent long hours watching the slow setting of the western stars beyond the black wall of jungle where it had been thrust back by the clearing for the village. Possessed of more than a cursory knowledge of astronomy, he took a sick man's pleasure in speculating as to the dwellers on the unseen worlds of those incredibly remote suns, to haunt whose houses of light life came forth, a shy visitant from the rayless crypts of matter. He could no more apprehend limits to time than bounds to space. No subversive radium-speculations had shaken his steady scientific faith in the conservation of energy and the indestructibility of matter. Always and forever must there have been stars. And surely, in that cosmic ferment, all must be comparatively alike, comparatively of the same substance, or substances, save for the freaks of the ferment. All must obey or compose the same laws that ran without infraction through the entire experience of man. Therefore, he argued and agreed, must worlds and life be appanages to all the suns as they were appanages to the particular sun of his own solar system.

Even as he lay here, under the breadfruit tree, an intelligence that stared across the starry gulfs, so must all the universe be exposed to the ceaseless scrutiny of innumerable eyes like his, though grantedly different, with behind them, by the same token, intelligences that questioned and sought the meaning and the construction of the whole. So reasoning, he felt his soul go forth in kinship with that august company, that multitude whose gaze was forever upon the arras of infinity.

Who were they, what were they, those far-distant and superior ones who had bridged the sky with their gigantic, red-iridescent, heaven-singing message? Surely, and long since, had they, too, trod the path on which man had so recently, by the calendar of the cosmos, set his feet. And to be able to send such a message across the pit of space, surely they had reached those heights to which man, in tears and travail and bloody sweat, in darkness and confusion of many counsels, was so slowly struggling. And what were they on their heights? Had they won Brotherhood? Or had they learned that the law of Love imposed the penalty of weakness and decay? Was strife life? Was the rule of all the universe the pitiless rule of natural selection? And, most immediately and poignantly, were their far conclusions, their long-won wisdoms shut, even then, in the huge, metallic heart of the Red One, waiting for the first earth-man to read? Of one thing he was certain: No drop of red dew shaken from the lion-mane of some sun in torment was the sounding sphere. It was of design, not chance, and it contained the speech and wisdom of the stars.

What engines and elements and mastered forces, what lore and mysteries and destiny-control might be there! Undoubt-



edly, since so much could be inclosed in so little a thing as the foundation-stone of a public building, this tremendous sphere should contain vast histories, profounds of research achieved beyond man's wildest guesses, laws and formulas that, easily mastered, would make man's life on earth, individual and collective, spring up from its present mire to inconceivable heights of purity and power. It was Time's greatest gift to blindfold, insatiable, and sky-aspiring man. And to him, Bassett, had been vouchsafed the lordly fortune to be the first to receive this message from man's interstellar kin.

No white man, much less no outland man of the other bush-tribes, had gazed upon the Red One and lived. Such the law expounded by Ngurn to Bassett. There was such a thing as blood-brotherhood, Bassett, in return, had often argued in the past. But Ngurn had stated solemnly, "No." Even the blood-brotherhood was outside the favor of the Red One. Only a man born within the tribe could look upon the Red One and live. But now, his guilty secret known only to Balatta, whose fear of immolation before the Red One fast-sealed her lips, the situation was different. What he had to do was to recover from the abominable fevers that weakened him and gain to civilization. Then would he lead an expedition back, and, although the entire population of Guadalcanar be destroyed, extract from the heart of the Red One the message to the world from other worlds.

But Bassett's relapses grew more frequent, his brief convalescences less and less vigorous, his periods of coma longer, until he came to know, beyond the last promptings of the optimism inherent in so tremendous a constitution as his own, that he would never live to cross the grasslands, perforate the perilous coast-jungle, and reach the sea. He faded as the Southern Cross rose higher in the sky, till even Balatta knew that he would be dead ere the nuptial date determined by his tabu. Ngurn made pilgrimage personally and gathered the smoke-materials for the curing of Bassett's head, and to him made proud announcement and exhibition of the artistic perfectness of his intention when Bassett should be dead. As for himself, Bassett was not shocked. Too long and too deeply had life ebbed down in him to bite him with fear of its impending extinction.

Came the day when all mists and cobwebs dissolved, when he found his brain clear as a bell, and took just appraisal of his body's weakness. Neither hand nor foot could he lift. So little control of his body did he have that he was hardly aware of possessing one. Lightly indeed his flesh sat upon his soul, and his soul, in its briefness of clarity, knew, by its very clarity, that the black of cessation was near. He knew the end was close, knew that in all truth he had with his eyes beheld the Red One, the messenger between the worlds, knew that he would never live to carry that message to the world—that message, for aught to the contrary, which might already have waited man's hearing in the heart of Guadalcanar for ten thousand years. And Bassett stirred with resolve, calling Ngurn to him out under the shade of the breadfruit tree, and with the old devil-devil doctor discussed the terms and arrangements of his last life-effort, his final adventure in the quick of the flesh.



## This Heating System Economizes Coal and Makes Starting Easy

Coal-Burning,  
Self-Regulating,  
Safe,  
Economical

**WASCO**  
GARAGE HEATING SYSTEM  
READY-TO-SET-UP

Hot-Water  
Heating System  
for Garages and  
Small Buildings

Your wife would do her Red Cross and other work in comfort this winter in your car. WASCO will keep the machine ready for a quick, sure start the coldest weather and will eliminate the discomfort of riding in poorly ventilated, crowded street cars. WASCO will prevent freeze-ups and big repair bills, and will prevent the straining of starting device caused by trying to start a cold engine. The expense of one freeze-up would more than pay for this heating system.

The self regulating WASCO is also ideal for other one floor buildings, such as offices, stores, etc. It uses less coal than ordinary stoves or heating systems. WASCO is used in Government Military Hospitals.

"I have used WASCO for two years, and am satisfied I cannot recommend it too highly. It is a perfect success in every way. Cannot see how anyone owning a car can afford to be without one." S. A. FOSTER, Lincoln, Nebr.

### WRITE FOR HANDSOME CATALOG

It explains in detail the accurate automatic regulation of this garage heating system. It also contains letters from many users in all parts of the country. Any handy man can set up the WASCO, saving the expense of a plumber or steam fitter.

W. A. SCHLEIT MFG. CO., INC., 271 Eastwood Sta., Syracuse, N. Y.

Originators of Special Heating System for Garages.

Dealers: Write for "exclusive territory" proposition and selling help. Quick delivery from warehouses in Boston, Jersey City, Philadelphia, Chicago and Kansas City. Stocks carried by Distributors in other big Cities.



A 2-car WASCO System (2 radiators). This heater and 1 radiator makes a 1-car WASCO System.



## HARRISON FISHER'S LATEST PICTURE

(SEE COVER)

IN FULL COLORS  
SIZE 11x14 INCHES  
PRICE 25 CENTS POSTPAID

WE PUBLISH ALL THE LATEST  
HARRISON FISHER PICTURES

SEND FOR OUR BEAUTIFUL  
ILLUSTRATED CATALOGUE  
FREE ON REQUEST



150—"Cynthia"

**COSMOPOLITAN PRINT DEPT.**  
119 West 40th Street, New York City



FOR THE MAN WHO CARES

**The Florsheim SHOE**

**FOR** long service and good looks wear Florsheims—they stay good for a long time—they save money. Florsheim quality makes your shoe money go farther.

**Nine Dollars and up**  
Florsheim quality is economy.  
Look for name in shoe.

**The Florsheim Shoe Company**  
Chicago, U. S. A.

Write for "Styles of the Times."

**The Gothic—**



**DIAMONDS ON CREDIT**

**Send for Diamond, Watch and Jewelry Catalog IT IS FREE!**

There are over 2000 photographic illustrations of Diamond Rings, Diamond La Valieres, Diamond Ear Screws, Diamond Scarf Pins, Diamond Studs, Signet and Emblem Rings, Watches, Wrist Watches, Bracelets, Cuff Links, Brooches, Lockets, Chains, Charms, Silverware, Clocks, Toilet Sets; also our wonderfully showy assembled Solitaire Diamond Clusters.

Whatever you select will be sent, all shipping charges prepaid.

**You See and Examine Article Right in Your Own Hands**

If satisfied, pay one-fifth of purchase price and keep it; balance divided into eight equal amounts, payable monthly. Our diamonds are distinctive in beauty and brilliancy. Remarkable values.

**WATCHES** Our Catalog illustrates and describes all the new watches—15, 17, 19, 21, 23 Jewels, solid gold and gold filled cases. Splendid bargains in 25-year guaranteed watches on credit terms as low as

**\$2.50 A MONTH**

**LOFTIS**  
BROS & CO. 1127 N. STATE ST.  
CHICAGO, ILL.  
Stores in Leading Cities

"I know the law, O Ngurn!" he concluded the matter. "Whoso is not of the folk may not look upon the Red One and live. I shall not live, anyway. Your young men shall carry me before the face of the Red One, and I shall look upon him and hear his voice, and thereupon die under your hand. O Ngurn! Thus will the three things be satisfied—the law, my desire, and your quicker possession of my head, for which all your preparations wait."

To which Ngurn consented, adding:

"It is better so. A sick man who cannot get well is foolish to live on for so little a while. Also, is it better for the living that he should go. You have been much in the way of late. Not but what it was good for me to talk to such a wise one. But for moons of days we have held little talk. Instead, you have taken up room in the house of heads, making noises like a dying pig, or talking much and loudly in your own language, which I do not understand. This has been a confusion to me, for I like to think on the great things of the light and dark as I turn the heads in the smoke. Your much noise has thus been a disturbance to the long-learning and hatching of the final wisdoms that will be mine before I die. As for you, upon whom the Dark has already brooded, it is well that you die now. And I promise you, in the long days to come when I turn your head in the smoke, no man of the tribe shall come in to disturb us. And I will tell you many secrets, for I am an old man and very wise, and I shall be adding wisdom to wisdom as I turn your head in the smoke."

So a litter was made, and, borne on the shoulders of half a dozen of the men, Bassett departed on the last little adventure that was to cap the total adventure, for him, of living. With a body of which he was scarcely aware, for even the pain had been exhausted out of it, and with a bright, clear brain that accommodated him to a quiet ecstasy of sheer lucidness of thought, he lay back on the lurching litter and watched the fading of the passing world, beholding for the last time the breadfruit tree before the devil-devil house, the dim day beneath the matted jungle roof, the gloomy gorge between the shouldering mountains, the saddle of raw limestone, and the mesa of black volcanic sand.

Down the spiral path of the pit they bore him, encircling the sheening, glowing Red One that seemed ever imminent to iridesce from color and light into sweet singing and thunder. And over bones and logs of immolated men and gods they bore him, past the horrors of other immolated ones that yet lived, to the three-king-post tripod and the huge king-post striker.

Here Bassett, helped by Ngurn and Balatta, weakly sat up, swaying weakly from the hips, and, with clear, unflinching, all-seeing eyes, gazed upon the Red One.

"Once, O Ngurn—" he said, not taking his eyes from the sheening, vibrating surface whereon and wherein all the shades of cherry-red played unceasingly, ever aquiver to change into sound, to become silken rustlings, silvery whisperings, golden thrummings of cords, velvet pipings of elf-land, mellow distances of thunderings.

"I wait," Ngurn prompted, after a long pause, the tomahawk unassumingly ready in his hand.

"Once, O Ngurn," Bassett repeated,

The next Jack London story, *In the Cave of the Dead*, will appear in November *Cosmopolitan*.

"let the Red One speak, so that I may see it speak as well as hear it. Then strike, thus, when I raise my hand; for, when I raise my hand, I shall drop my head forward and made place for the stroke at the base of my neck. But, O Ngurn, I, who am about to pass out of the light of day forever, would like to pass with the wonder-voice of the Red One singing greatly in my ears."

"And I promise you that never will a head be so well cured as yours," Ngurn assured him, at the same time signaling the tribesmen to man the propelling ropes suspended from the king-post striker. "Your head shall be my greatest piece of work in the curing of heads."

Bassett smiled quietly to the old one's conceit as the great carved log, drawn back through two-score feet of space, was released. The next moment, he was lost in ecstasy at the abrupt and thunderous liberation of sound. But such thunder! Mellow it was with preciousness of all sounding metals. Archangels spoke in it; it was magnificently beautiful before all other sounds; it was invested with the intelligence of supermen of planets of other suns; it was the voice of God, seducing and commanding to be heard. And—the everlasting miracle of that interstellar metal! Bassett, with his own eyes, saw color and colors transform into sound till the whole visible surface of the vast sphere was acrawl and titillant and vaporous with what he could not tell was color or was sound. In that moment, the interstices of matter were his, and the interfusings and intermingling transfusings of matter and force.

Time passed. At the last, Bassett was brought back from his ecstasy by an impatient movement of Ngurn. He had quite forgotten the old devil-devil one. A quick flash of fancy brought a husky chuckle into Bassett's throat. His shotgun lay beside him in the litter. All he had to do, muzzle to head, was press the trigger and blow his own head into nothingness.

But why cheat him, was Bassett's next thought. Head-hunting, cannibal beast of a human that was as much ape as human, nevertheless old Ngurn had, according to his lights, played squarer than square. He was in himself a forerunner of ethics and contract, of consideration and gentleness in man. No, Bassett decided: it would be a ghastly pity and an act of dishonor to cheat the old fellow at the last. His head was Ngurn's, and Ngurn's head to cure it would be.

And Bassett, raising his hand in signal, bending forward his head as agreed, so as to expose cleanly the articulation to his taut spinal cord, forgot Balatta, who was merely a woman, a woman merely and only and undesired. He knew, without seeing, when the razor-edged hatchet rose in the air behind him. And for that instant, ere the end, there fell upon Bassett the shadow of the Unknown, a sense of impending marvel of the rending of walls before the Imaginable. Almost, when he knew the blow had started and just ere the edge of steel bit the flesh and nerves, it seemed that he gazed upon the serene face of the Medusa, Truth. And, simultaneous with the bite of the steel on the onrush of the Dark, in a flashing instant of fancy, he saw the vision of his head turning slowly, always turning, in the devil-devil house beside the breadfruit tree.